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ABSTRACT

This paper, from the Workshop Center for Open Education, brings together articles dealing with the evaluation of change and the change of evaluation in the public school systems. The document is divided into four main sections: a) Issues and Perspectives, b) Alternative Approaches, c) Documents, and d) Fiascos. The first section deals with evaluation in relation to the horizontal dimension of learning and with competency-based teaching. The second section presents some alternative approaches to evaluation. Documentation is discussed as an alternative, and two specific evaluation programs are presented. The third section presents two aids for evaluation: a guide for reading assessment and a teacher's diagnostic instrument. The Visiting Committee Report from the Vine School in Cincinnati, Ohio is also included. The last section presents the process of evaluation in the technical sense. It deals with the question, How do we make schools work? (BRB)

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Evaluation reconsidered

A position paper and supporting documents on evaluating change and changing evaluation

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Editor's Note

As part of its continuing concern about issues relating to the spread of open education in public schools, the Workshop Center presents this collection of materials, some new, some reprinted, that bear on the question of evaluation. What we have tried to do simply is start a discussion, not provide the final word on the subject and thereby close off discussion, as so often happens with matters of some complexity.

Most of what we have selected needs no particular justification. They are pieces of a whole--from Lillian Weber's position paper to the excerpt from a study by Ralph Nader's Center for the Study of Responsive Law that attempts to bare the bankruptcy of the system of evaluation that now prevails. In reprinting *in toto* "The Visiting Committee Report on the Vine School," we share a document, long out of print, that many consider a classic. The fuller discussion of the subject of evaluation needs, ultimately, to be made part of a national debate.

Arthur Tobier

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Toward the finer specificity

Lillian Weber

Lillian Weber is director of the Workshop Center for Open Education.

I

In evaluating an educational change, all kinds of approaches are valid; each may have material to contribute to the conclusion. For example, self-description is a valid exercise in evaluation, just as is a decision by parents to abide by their initial choice of program or a principal's willingness to extend the program -- both acts based on firsthand observation and judgment. Another evaluative dimension is added through interviews with parents, teachers, and children, all the participants in classroom change. Moreover, this dimension of evaluation may be developed through documentation that records the points of view of all participants in a program. The wise course, it seems to me, would be to seek out, as necessary, all such evaluations -- from parents, from principals, from teachers, from children -- to guide us in improving whatever we have done. For what we in Open Corridors look for in the evaluative process is nothing more than help for a better implementation of our chosen direction. It is in this context that we judge external assessment and find the present situation wanting.

The external assessment process that now prevails rests, just as it always has under the traditional structure, on children's achievement with such standardized tests as the Metropolitan Achievement Test (MAT), which accepts without question the way schools function as screening and placement agencies for public society. These tests are also currently used as a measure of teacher's skill and performance by those pressuring for accountability. In Deborah Meier's analysis of the MAT and in other documents (*Notes*, March 1972), as well as in the work of the Advisory Service for Open Corridors, we have challenged this use of tests. We challenge the tests' unquestioning acceptance of this definition of school function, and our work challenges the reliability of the predictions that the test scores represent.

But more important, we feel the present way of testing achievement is insufficiently related to helping the teacher focus on the needs of the individual child. Nor does it help parents whose prime concern is their child's individual development. Because we think parents want concrete information, we have emphasized the need for specificity in accounting. In our search to refine our observation of how a child is developing skills, we have produced our own reading assessment instrument that will help the teacher plan for a child's further growth. We have also sought to find additional ways of recording and documentation that will support such specific accounting to parents. Such accounting, however, is made to the individual and is necessarily a limited statement.

Another limited statement can be developed from using the test for a sampling evaluation of programs. If the aim in a test is to compare achievement levels of children in one program with those in another program, sampling techniques rather than mass testing of every child are probably adequate. (In fact, for whatever such a statement is worth, the test scores show no decline for the children in the corridor program who are tested regularly along with all other children in New York City.) But that says very little beyond confirming that present evidence fails to reveal differences due to methodology in children's first development of skills. There may well be questions about the development of reading, as it is related to different ways of supporting that development, that still need formulating and that are not used by present tests.

In fact, such limited statements -- on the individual and on program -- leave untouched a whole area of additional questions we think need answering if we are to progress further toward our goal of building better and better support structures for children's development. We may want to document the many ways in which reading skills emerge when children are offered a variety of

approaches. We may want to base our questions about achievement on very different segments of time in a child's growth or on areas not currently evaluated or we may want to ask about growth in broader terms. We need insight into the interactions a child finds possible within our setting. We may want to know more about the ways children organize their energy and about the connection between what a child does and the settings we offer. We may want to understand and document those aspects that reflect diversity as well as coherence. We may want information on what Carini terms the "thickening" over time of the child's patterns. In order to enhance our understanding of children's growth we need to document the processes and directionality of growth, as well as to conduct research into what our settings make possible. Carini's discussion of documentation on page 00 raises all these questions and they are of prime importance.

II

What our own -- Open Corridor -- setting makes possible is a greater knowing -- an expansion of our view of the child, which in turn should result in more intelligent teacher response. We started with a developmental description of how a child learns, which we continue to use as guide, to which we continually add. In the old school settings, study of children's interactions was limited, often impossible. In our new settings, it becomes possible. Obviously what is needed, given this view, cannot be satisfied by a single evaluation project. Our settings both need research and make research possible. Our settings must be evaluated, studied, and assessed for how well they allow explorations that will expand our view of a child's growth, how well they support this growth, and how much further they can go to support our expanding view of this growth.

This same line of reasoning holds for questions about teacher competence. To look askance at the teacher who takes the risks of change and not help her take the necessary next steps for her development is wasteful, in our minds. Rather than find fault with risks taken, we would pose questions to keep open the possiblities of growth. What is the pattern of relationships in our situations? What growth is needed in the teacher to support a child's growth or achievement? Has the teacher grown in seeing how she can adjust the environment to further support a child's growth as an active individual using this environment? Has the teacher grown in seeing the significance of a child's action as related to the growth of his mental structures?

Obviously we are, in the light of our aim, assessing the teacher as observer and expecting a more and more focused and refined observation. But we do not consider the teacher's principal role to be that of diagnostician. Such a view of the teacher raises questions about role and function, and may interfere with other aspects of the teacher's job -- her functions as interactor and as creator, extender, and adapter of the environment in response to her observation. For indeed, most of what the teacher learns about children is learned not in observing as a bystander (though one hopes that the teacher will draw back from time to time in order to better assess what is occurring), but rather, in the course of her interaction *with* a child when she observes and reflects on the effect of that interaction. Further, we question attempts to evaluate the teacher as diagnostician in the narrow sense, that is, in terms of her/his knowledge and use of a detailed framework of stages. Such a specified framework of diagnosis may not only interfere with those aspects of the teacher's function already noted, but may also be too fixed to match the complexity of the phenomenon it is measuring.

Detailed assessment of a child, of what should and could come next for that child, must be an open question, in part because it involves factors of a child's choice, his interest, and his focus. Given this understanding, it can be seen that the broad frame of understanding within which the teacher functions is one thing, and the flexibility and sensitivity of response coming from her own richness of connectedness is another matter. One kind of teacher training based on the sequence of content structure would help the teacher focus immediately on what the next step is for this child in math or in reading. Unfortunately this narrow focus may not produce the climate within which this next step could happen at all. Though focused, the climate may be a destructive one rather than a supportive one. The other kind of support for teacher development includes the knowledge of possible next steps, but stresses the richness of the teacher's experiences and connectedness, the teacher's understanding of a child's active process of growth and of the *conditions* and climate that support the growth of mental structures. Obviously the

latter is an integrated view. It includes both a conception of a child working in an integrated way in a humane climate, and a conception of the general direction of his growth, as well as the idiosyncratic nature of his growth, so that the environment can be adapted to support that growth.

In line with this latter approach, we suggest research on the *rhythms*, the steadiness or unsteadiness, of growth. Such a question could help focus teachers' efforts. Do the structures of growth require constant and steady, albeit thin, support, or intense interest and follow-through at moments of connection -- when a "wonderful idea" has been conceived? Research keeps ignoring this question, as well as the question about the role *time* plays in a child's synthesis and how that synthesis holds up over time.

Perhaps the important estimate the teacher must make in her "seeing" is whether a child is growing at all, whether he has stopped growing, whether in fact something is blocking growth -- in which case, there is a distinct indication to *see* further and indeed to seek help outside the teaching role for the "seeing."

It is very clear from the foregoing that what an evaluator can know about a child in any moment of time is very small and cannot represent what a child knows or can know in somewhat other circumstances. Even evaluators in open education tend to pose questions with the expectation that having put something in, something should come out. But what comes out in response to a question may be a very different matter from what a child does in action. At another time, with the same input, something might spark off another possible use and understanding.

Of course, our judgments and actions as teachers and evaluators stem from what a child makes accessible to us, but if these judgments are pervaded with a realization of limitation, we will at least be open to observe in many circumstances and over a period of time, and we will know that a child's response depends partly on what he is really paying attention to at that point. We will know, too, that time and again, in trying to respond to adults who want to find out what they have absorbed, children make mistakes because they often hardly understand what the other person means, and that they do this because their understanding of others is developmentally limited. Often children play back what they think the other person *wants* to hear rather than their own understanding. The experience of the complexity of human reaction and of synthesis over time is one that is common to all of us, re-evoked in memory and self-analysis. Therefore, an enormous humility must pervade all our evaluations: the search should be for additional knowledge.

III

Our own work in the Open Corridor has tried to project this concern. In every case, our work with teachers, solving the problems of classroom reorganization and community-building, and our work with parents and administrators, defining and redefining the organizational frame which provides space for the teachers' reorganizations, is guided by our attempt to consider the school as support structure for children's growth. Inevitably, as a result of first changes, we are led to finer specifications of intent. Inevitably, we are led to the more specifically focused observation of children. Inevitably, it is our own assessments and internal evaluations -- collected from teachers' logs reflecting on their organizational changes and curricular developments, collected in position papers and in the records of advisors -- that are the tools of the finer specification, and that *reflect* the finer specification.

Through this process of teacher and advisor development we tried to build a self-correcting evaluative process into our work so that necessary adjustments could be made in our thinking and in our implementation. The expansion of meanings and intents that results from expanding the frame of understanding is accompanied by and results in shifts in self-assessment. Each increase in our sensitization to the processes of language development, each increase in our understanding of how the child organizes his experience, lends new specificity to our self-assessment and to our evaluation of what is needed in the situations in which we work. As advisors share these sensitizations with teachers, the teachers' assessments are also revised. Documentation of this process of revision is documentation not only of situations but of teacher and advisor development.

Obviously this concentration on teacher and advisor development assumes that what teachers do

counts, that what advisors do counts. Though we reject, as unsupported by current research, the view that assumes a one-to-one and immediate relationship between what the teacher does and what happens with the child, underlying our concentration on teacher development is an *a priori* assumption that a teacher's actions *do* make a difference. Our assumption is that social interaction--including that of teacher and child--is a significant process that can result in significant shifts in the person, in at least some inclusion of the "other's" viewpoint. Acknowledging that teacher-child interactions are only a part of the totality of interactions affecting a child, our concern, nevertheless, is with that part. What exactly produces the effect I speak of, how to *ensure* that it happens, how the interaction with the adult assists the individual child's process of synthesizing his understandings over time--these are all still the imponderables. But the *a priori* assumption that what teachers do counts, even if the process is ill-understood, means that teachers work in the context of an assumed responsibility for their interactions with children. How, in the presence of so many imponderables, is their assumption of responsibility justified? Justification must be based on a presumption that the teacher has or will seek out greater experience, will adopt a longer view of possibilities and consequences to offer the growing child, and is dedicated to furthering the child's growth. Only informed intelligence and observations of a child's growth *can* guide the choice of content and interactions appropriate to that child. Thus our assumption is that the adult's responsibility is to bring to the adult-child interaction the broadest reach of his/her available knowledge of child development and the nature and possibilities of content.

Our concentration in teacher development is to help teachers fulfill their responsibility: to help them stretch and cultivate their intelligence about a child with whom they are dealing, about content, and about the organizational and time environments in which they work. How their intelligence affects a child may be unknown, but they can bring no less and no more to their interactions in support of that child's development. In our self-assessments the extent of our mobilizations around this conception of teacher development looms large. Our settings and our interactions are intended to keep open the doors for the continuity of a child's further growth, to give more space for the functioning of a child's own time clock of development, and to prevent closure, or undue stasis. Even if only partial implementation is all we can do, it will still take all of our informed intelligence and sensitivity to do that much or anywhere near it.

IV

But the truth is, for better or worse, no one feels easy until work is evaluated in some way considered authoritative and by someone external to the program. Of course we need an outside look--one that brings to the assessment process a view free of the constraints of the frame in which we work.

We need the observations of those who have studied the developmental process, the language process, the reading process. We need the expertise that comes from other fields. We need the observations of those who know other ways of organizing for the support of children's growth. We need an assessment that leads us to see implications we ourselves had previously overlooked and that could help us with plans for the future.

Unfortunately, with a few exceptions, what is currently called evaluation is very little associated with the search for better implementations of the school's support structure for children's growth. Instead, evaluation is employed as judgment, the referrent power for such decisions as funding and permissions. Evaluators tend, moreover, to look at implementations in isolation from their rationale, and judgments on funding therefore tend without discrimination to discard rationale with implementation. *The evaluative process, in fact, has seldom included even an awareness of the rationale for change or the organizational structures within which what is evaluated takes place. So programs are discarded after short trials, and either new ones follow in an endless cycle of waste, or there is a return to old practice, whose rationale and organizational structure are also unexamined, but whose readoption is imposed as part of the evaluative process.*

Neither our conception of the school as support structure for children's growth nor the developmental description that guides our changes is offered up for judgment in this unaware fashion. This is our commitment as educators -- not to be dislodged by the limited questions and narrow view of evaluators. Evaluation used for such judgmental purposes, which does or doesn't rec-

ommend funding, often results in half an implementation -- an implementation poised toward an impossible "going back." But going back is also not a question we submit to evaluation. We ask, back to what? To the discontinuity of the old way? To its passive and mass kind of base? To the sterility of environment and the total lack of social interaction? We have already judged the old traditional education for its failures. Even "good" formal education has been judged a mismatch for its limitations, its prescribed take-in and its inadequate, too-narrow support for a child's potentialities. We maintain, instead, that the assessment that is a necessary and welcome part of our endless search for better and better practice cannot be made from an evaluative stance that is *so* completely external to and unconscious of the mesh between what we do and our rationale for doing it. In other words, questions that fail to assess either the process or the institutional framework of a program cannot contribute anything new to its implementation.

Of course it may be that the very nature of the externalism of evaluation, asking its questions without the benefit of imbeddedness or long engagement with the program it is assessing, makes for the difficulty in confronting change. Change requires (1) a commitment to its *realization*, (2) time, and (3) sensitivity in reassessing and adapting as the process unfolds. The evaluator's task, however, is not change, and his time engagements are different from ours. Research, on the other hand, committed to "finding out," to "playing around" with data and to rearranging and reconceiving, springs from the long engagement. The rearranging and reconceiving preceding change springs similarly from creative long engagement, and the adaptations to realize change require similar, sensitive reassessing.

Thus we think that until evaluators and researchers immerse themselves in the changed organization they are assessing and study its definitions, they will not develop the questions pertinent to what is being attempted. They will only continue to ask the same questions pertinent to the old unchanged organization, questions that are either poorly focused or wrong, unexamined or "external" questions, ignorant of the rationale of what is being examined. Only immersion in the history and processes of change will yield questions that focus and propel further assessment and development. Such an evaluation -- external and aware of implementations from many programs -- could assist further development by externalizing and making conscious some of the questions that need study and focus.

Better documentation of our own process and the history of our development would contribute to assessment, too. Is the change in school structure that we have projected a possibility? Have we produced relevant changes in structure, in climate? In what ways? Has the institution itself changed in its relationship? How far along are we in this? What are the possibilities for extension?

Many ways have been found to contend with the organizational reality of the school; these need to be evaluated. Is the Open Corridor a successful way of contending with old relationships and the old structures of control, of supervision, of decision-making, of supply, of finances? Are there other ways? Is advisory help important? Necessary? For how long? what are the varieties of advisory format, its ties to the schools, the desirable duration of these ties? What structures are needed for the continuance of the advisory? What is the cost of advisory continuance? What structures can be developed from within the present context of supervision to take over from the external advisory? Is the Open Corridor teacher community such a structure, supporting the continuity of the process of change through self-assessment and reassessment? Can the change process become autonomous and stabilized as self-perpetuating? Are external funding sources necessary? What help is given by a Workshop Center?

The horizontal dimension of learning

Anne Bussis
Edward Chittenden

The following is excerpted from a paper that Drs. Chittenden and Bussis presented at the annual meeting of the National Association for the Education of Young Children in November 1971. The authors are part of a team from the Educational Testing Service conducting the official evaluation of the Workshop Center for the U. S. Office of Education.

From the outset we tried to work with a conception of the child, as learner, that seemed appropriate to the priorities of the informal programs and, of equal importance, seemed to be well grounded in psychological research and theory. We thought it important to maintain a working distinction between growth and learning in a vertical sense and growth and learning in a horizontal sense. In other words, to think of the child's development as defined by dimensions of breadth as well as height.

Turning to Piaget's works for illustration, growth along the sequence of stages and substages can be considered as progress in a vertical sense. Each stage represents a somewhat higher, or at least somewhat more abstract, levl of attainment. This is indeed the aspect of Piaget's writings that seems always to attract the educator's attention first. There is however, another facet to Piaget's work which, for us at least, is more significant for present purposes. This is the image of the child as a constructor of reality--as one who puts together all sorts of things in a variety of ways. The important dimension here is not the level or logical goodness of these constructions, but rather the extent to which the constructions testify to the child's breadth of experience and his ability to build upon it.

This aspect of learning is clearest perhaps in Piaget's earlier books. When, for example, the child tells the interviewer that "moving trees" make the wind blow--this is prized by Piaget. This is evidence of the mind at work--of the construction of reality. The child has noted the motion of trees, it correlation with wind, and has had a go attheory building. Admittedly, this theory, by some vertical standards may be fairly primitive, but it testifies to a child who is active in the use of his experience. In evaluating what children derive from school experiences, we need to be sensitive to such a "horizontal" dimension of cognition.

We stress the "horizontal" because there is some evidence that educational programs which emphasize the importance of the child's explorations, of freely formed associations, we have their measurable and perhaps most significant impact along a horizontal dimension more than on a vertical scale. (At least if verticality is measured by evidence of attainment of major developmental milestones.) Some of our own past work, for example, suggests that Piagetian tests when designed to assess the stage or level of thinking (with the focus on vertical progression) are not sensitive to the accomplishments of educational programs which appear to offer rich experiential possibilities. Thus, the conservation of quantity and the development of certain other logical structures probably appear neither sooner nor later in children in informal programs compared to formal ones. If, however, one can look at the breadth or vigor of the response--of its meaning--then this can prove to be a clearer reflection of the experiential opportunities offered in a more open school setting.

Carini et al., report that children in a more informal program showed evidence of a richer network of associated meanings for the objects to be classified on classification tasks; yet the *level* of abstraction of their classification schemes was no higher than children in more formal programs. "Instead of 'concept formulation' and 'abstraction,' our findings would indicate that children in the schools are absorbed in the object and the object properties. They are in Schachtel's sense of the term, 'objectifying' experience, rather than conceptualizing it."

The kinds of assessment procedures we explored are quite varied. Many of them are not too successful and all are still in need of more work. They in-

cluded attempts to look at: (1) communication; (2) perception of school; (3) intuition; (4) writing; (5) quantitative concepts.

Under the heading of quantitative concepts, one type of problem that we explored consisted of tasks in counting and number sense. These tasks were intended to be part of a broader attempt to understand the child's conception of number and to look for ways in which such conception could be appreciably affected by his school experience. We tried them out with third graders in conventional schools, for the most part. One format of the problem was simply to give to children (to hand to them) little buildings constructed of small wooden cubes and to ask them how many cubes were in the building. Another form of the problem called for estimation of the numbers of beads in containers of various sizes. Right away we found these counting procedures to be much more difficult for children to handle than we had anticipated. While third grade children regarded the problem of counting as a simple enough one, they frequently lost their way in manipulating the buildings. Spatially they could not keep track of what they had counted and what they had not counted. Moreover, although on paper they could show us that $3 \times 4 = 12$ or $4 + 4 = 8$, they tended not to apply these operations even to those cube buildings where the operations seemed very clearly called for (e.g., four yellow cubes attached to four blue cubes). Instead of adding, the children typically enumerated.

We also posed some straightforward problems involving the use of a 12-inch ruler. While a few children seemed to be able to use the ruler as a tool, most of them seemed to have to contend with it, and could use it only in clearly prescribed ways. For example, they would readily measure the distance between dots placed 24 inches apart, but 17 inches apart caused consternation and confusion. The problem for the researcher in examining behavior in any of these examples is to try to differentiate those aspects (such as the fragmentary approach to estimating) that may reflect general characteristics of the stage of development from aspects which reflect schooling.

For example, one hypothesis which needs to be tested further is that on the counting, measurement, and estimation problems these children were thrown by the three-dimensional quality of the task material. Their kindergartens may have been three-dimensional, but instruction in the first three grades had been largely confined to workbooks and papers and pencils--a two-dimensional world. Thus, if the test is two-dimensional (such as a group paper-and-pencil test) the children's performance looks fairly sophisticated; if three-dimensional, a different picture emerges.

An equally important question concerns the child's ability to judge the requirements of the situation--to be conscious of his own capabilities and to act accordingly. We were interested in how children would go about handling problems and the extent to which they would or would not bring their own resources into play. Our clinical impression is that many of the children in the conventional programs operated with sets of poorly formulated rules that they had only partly assimilated; and that although they went about the tasks willingly enough, their behavior was often not very sensible. Thus, they could tell you that their own height was four feet but that the height of the table was five. They could in their workbooks say that 3×4 is 12; but they would enumerate the legs of three chairs in order to figure out how many legs there were altogether.

We have no clear data yet, but nevertheless, are tempted to hypothesize that more informal programs--which involve the individual as a learner--are programs where children approach these problems with a better sense of their own capabilities. For example, a boy in one of the more open schools was examining a cubical building constructed of 27 little ($9 \times 9 \times 9$) cubes (incidentally, only about 10 percent of some 60 children arrived at a correct solution for this item). When asked how he figured an answer of 27, he said, "Well, I know that two 9s are 18, and I know there are 9 more on the top, but I don't know three 9s; so I went 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27" (pointing to each of the remaining cubes. Another boy in the same school tried out some estimations of distance and height, using his own body as point of reference. Later, after several more of my questions, he said, "Are these questions really so important?"

Such abilities to sense one's own resources--to size up the situation, to take some action appropriate both to the situation and to oneself--seem to be an exceedingly important quality of the child's performance to assess. The mark of competence in any area is indeed this balance between sense of one's own capabilities and sizing up the requirements of the situation.

As a result of our efforts to date, we are convinced that research and evaluation efforts are misdirected, when they somehow fall into the trap of attempting to measure "achievement" or "cognition" over there, and "self-concept" or "creativity" over there, as if they were to be compartmentalized. It is a serious mistake because any definition of achievement which is appropriate to a modern, informal program must include the self and creative effort within that definition. We should investigate thoroughly the areas of traditional concern; language arts, mathematics, sciences, and should assess whether children's accomplishments in these areas are marked by mindless application of poorly assimilated rules or by judgment and creative effort.

Problems in counting can serve to illustrate another aspect of assessment strategy that may have general significance. If we review the development of ability to count during the years from 4 to 9, we could describe the period of 4 to 7 or so, as ages of *acquisition* (children learning at very different rates and for very different reasons). However, by age 8 or 9, most children understand what counting is about and for simpler tasks find counting to be a relatively trivial matter. This age period we might call a period of *consolidation* of the skills.

The strategy we are suggesting is this: If you are primarily interested in assessing the meaning of an activity for children (some component of the horizontal) you may get a very different picture from the data, depending on whether the skills or abilities you examined are in an *acquisition* or a *consolidation* period for the age group on question. Thus, if you give counting tests to kindergarteners, the results correlate with IQ tests, educational background of parents, etc. Among other matters, you measure differences in the children's understanding of the problem (for some, counting is like reciting an alphabet; for others, there may be some sense of number). At third grade, however, almost all children understand the nature of the task and thus differences in their performance cannot be attributed to understanding on that level. In other words, if an assessment purpose is to look at what children can do with what they are learning--the meaning of their learning--then assessment procedures might well involve measures that all children of that age can deal with, can understand, can "pass." The data then are not whether they pass the test, but how they go about it.

Although we have not explored it as much, a parallel case could certainly be made for the assessment of progress in reading. The time to assess might be in the consolidating fourth, fifth, and sixth grades with a focus on the meaning of reading: What is it a part of? Measures should not just assess whether children *can* read, but whether they *do* read and with what understandings.

Competency-based teaching?

James MacDonald

James MacDonald is a faculty member of the University of North Carolina.

I'm not sure at all any more what competencies are, since everyone seems to have a different definition of what competencies mean. Further, I find the whole idea of competency-based teacher education to be proposed as an answer, and it is not clear what the question is. Are we saying that teachers are not efficient and effective, and the way to improve teaching is through competency-based teacher education? Or, are we saying that we need to find some way of using our research tools, which we have developed in the analysis of teaching over the last ten years, and competency-based education will lend itself to this use? Or, perhaps we're saying that in order to stay alive politically during this time, teacher education has to respond to the fads and forces that are abroad and thus must move toward teacher competency. All of these forces are possible reasons.

I personally have an idea about what competency is, and it's much more specific and behavioral than what has been mentioned up to now. In other words, I don't see any advantage in defining teacher competencies in broad terms. The only way I can see any reason for talking about competency is to define it in terms of behavior. This would mean a set of specifiable behaviors that all teachers who are "good" should perform in prescribed situations and conditions. Without this specificity, an observer would be free to make any inference he perceives, and consequently you would get different interpretations for any two or more observers. Without this specificity we are open to the same criticisms that are leveled today. Thus, although I do not wish to set up a straw man, I do not see any change in conceptualization from present programs unless teacher competencies are defined in highly specific behavioral terms, as prescriptions for good teaching. I disagree most heartily with this attempt.

This behavioral approach is primarily in tune with a general technological rationale that exists in our society, and it is now being applied to human engineering problems. The people who are interested in this approach are primarily interested in control. They wish to control the behavior of others for the achievement of goals they believe in. This is a mechanism, a potentially powerful technique, and I have a number of reservations and objections to this approach.

Let us begin with a definition of "good" teaching. It is obvious that any competency-based teacher education program must have a clear and behaviorally specifiable conception of "good teaching." This may be relatively easy for one person to produce, or a small group of like minded individuals. Indeed, we all have our biases along these lines. But, a glance at the history of research in teaching surely tells us that professional agreement is lacking. Thus, from the start a competency-based program is in trouble.

Since 1966 and the publication of the Coleman report, the assessment of education has had a dramatic shift from a focus upon so-called input variables (such as per pupil expenditures, teacher-pupil rates, books, facilities, etc.) to output variables (predominantly pupil achievement in terms of standardized test scores). The implications of the report and this focal shift are monumental for teacher education.

What, in effect, this says to teacher educators is that teacher competency may be related to pupil achievement, but the impact of the teacher's behavior is one of a number of exceedingly minor influences upon this achievement. Far more important are social class and family influences and the concomitant values, aspirations and attitudes of the students. Thus, it would suggest that a compentency-based teacher education program cannot be based upon any very direct or powerful correlation between teacher behavior and pupil achievement. If not, then how would one ground competencies?

Another way of looking at this is reflected in a recent USOE publication by Cronback and Snow.

Among other things they found in a survey of hundreds of reported research studies that there is no knowledge at present which we possess that will allow us to predict that a given method or treatment (including teacher behavior) will have a predictable positive effect upon any specific individual student. This being so, what specific teacher behavior would be best to develop? and why?

Thus, there is good and sufficient cause to ask whether a competency-based approach will work. This is an empirical question -- if -- we can agree upon competencies to be developed and, -- if -- we can agree upon criterion variables with which to make our judgments. These are two rather large "if's." It is my personal opinion, based on the kinds of large scale analyses referred to earlier, as well as the literature on the use of behavioral objectives and performance contracting, that what little payoff there might be (if any) is not worth the time and effort put into it. On the other hand, it should be avoided like the plague because of the total perspective you are accepting when you move in this direction.

For example, one must define behavioral competencies in terms of an existing conception of teacher-pupil relationships, existing curricula, and school organization. This seems to be a terribly naive perspective. Although I personally do not accept the reasonable possibility that society will be deschooled or education made optional, I most certainly am convinced that drastic changes must be made which call for a whole new (and to be created) way of thinking about what schools should be like. Thus, the implicit necessity to accept a status quo in order to define a practical set of competencies is, I believe, unacceptable.

Another side effect of this approach rests in the question of how the experiencing of this method of instruction will influence the development of the prospective teacher. It is at least suggestive that a competency-based teacher education will increase the likelihood of the appearance of a behavioral and competency-based program with children. This would be true if we learn what we do, and would result, I believe, in a deterioration of already shaky teacher-pupil relationships.

There is also the whole idea of individual learners as moral agents. This implies that the integrity of each learner is more important than the specific expectation you might have for him. Thus, choice would be essential, and a prepackaged set of competencies would not provide for or recognize the personal necessity of choice.

Teaching, I would like to suggest, might well be compared to another very complex human set of behaviors, i.e., speaking. It appears to me that specific teaching behaviors are like words in a spoken sentence. We know what we are going to say before we speak the word, but it emerges out of an undifferentiated whole. We do not add up our words, they are part of a whole that we only clearly know after we have spoken. Teaching I feel, is much that way. Teacher behaviors are part of a complex pattern which cannot be clearly known until its completion.

This is in contrast to the rather simplistic idea that somehow a teaching competency has either meaning or depth outside the context of the ongoing teacher activity as it is lived in the classroom. A "good" teacher can't be known before the fact. Any behavioral definition of "good teaching" will, I believe, be a tautology, e.g. good teaching is those behaviors I choose to develop in teachers and call "good"!

On the contrary, it is my position that "good" teaching flows from a human perspective and that many variable "behaviors" can lead to similar ends. It is to my observation far more important that a teacher have a basic conceptualization of teaching as a humanistic endeavor, and that this perspective be the result of creative action and reflection on the teacher's part. This perspective must include at least knowledge and understanding of society, human nature, education and the specifics of any given situation. Each teacher must take this in and create her own specific behavior in light of this perspective. In other words, the teachers I know don't lack for behaviors, they lack grounding, perspective and commitment to human ends.

Meanwhile it is quite clear to me that a competency-based approach is essentially a political response to pressures for accountability. It is a convenient rubric around which to harness discontents and parade old prejudices against the profession. I find this regrettable but the only reasonable explanation for the present furor and activity.

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Toward a shared appraisal

Charity James

To look for instant evaluation is no different in kind than demanding instant gratification. This is a curious lapse in a profession so dedicated to the Puritan ethic as ours. Ironically, the more eager educators are to make such demands the better satisfied they seem to be that children's gratification be deferred. One of the meanings which we must learn to associate with "open education," if we are to keep that term as good currency, is that our time-scale should be open-ended, being calculated in years, with flexible imaginative teachers, even if those good times were later overlaid by a conventional, perhaps reactionary, education in adolescence, there remains -- 20 years later -- a certain fluency, an ability to come and go in the environment. Thus, we should be preparing children for their future by looking forward into their lives and fighting a selfish albeit understandable desire for immediate feedback. Our priority has to be persons, not programs; and persons live a long time.

Nevertheless there are tactics, maybe even strategies to be considered if open education is not to be thought of as an impractical dream. We have to show what we are accountable to children, parents and school boards (in that order of priorities). As I look at the world of evaluation I notice three significant attempts to offer creative alternatives to mechanistic and myopic evaluation. First, anyone interested in liberating the lives of children from ignorant adult expectations must be grateful to Deborah Meier of the Open Corridor Advisory, who so imaginatively reveals the unforgivable ignorance of test-makers. Her contribution, the *evaluation of tests*, is an essential antidote to galloping testitis, the testmakers' disease.

A second main thrust is to work on *alternatives in evaluating programs*. (I think particularly of the imaginative creative work of Ed Chittenden and Anne Bussis.) I suspect that the importance of new developments in this field may be in the long run that they dissolve the barrier between cognition and affect which so limits our understanding of a child's learning; for we begin to realize that our fundamental concern should be with a child's perceptions and how they are affected by the will. If we need to test (rather than simply observing daily behavior) we should be looking for forms of testing which enable the child to tell us, directly or indirectly, This is how I perceive the problem, this is how I perceive it in relation to me, and this is how I perceive myself able (or unable) to act in relation to it. So long as we test in ways which divide cognition from affect and both from will we shall not have evaluation procedures that are worthy of open education.

A third move away from conventional evaluation procedures is practised a good deal in the evaluation of alternative high schools, but I have not seen it applied to the same extent for younger children. I refer to *process evaluation of institutions*, in which members of a resident team, or regular visitors, evaluate the institution in terms of individual teachers' and students' perceptions and attitudes, decision-making processes, roles of participants, reactions of various ethnic and socio-economic groups, and so on, using direct evidence like questionnaires and observation and indirect ones like attendance records.

These analyses of institutions at work are a useful contribution from sociology and social-psychology. They are, I suppose, an extension of the many 1960s analyses of interaction in classrooms, but they have two important additional ingredients: they are studies of the whole way of life of a school community and they are openly concerned with attitudes as well as with role and process.

In addition to these three strategies, there is a fourth kind of appraisal which I would hope to see developed more fully than I have seen it at

present. I refer to *appraisal of children*. I use the word appraisal rather than evaluation because it enjoys a comfortable mesalliance with the notion of "praise." To try to set a value on a child is intolerable, but to sum up a child in positive terms is worth doing.

I am surprised to find I have a contribution to make to evaluation in this country because I am respectful of American expertise in these fields, but I have not yet found any systems in operation which are an improvement on those I recommended in *Young Lives at Stake*. My experience is mainly at the 6th through 10th grade level, but I think these ideas would work pretty well for younger children also, as soon as more than one person teaches or comes regularly into contact with them.

The first requirement is for a group of teachers (or a teacher with an aide, or with the librarian or nurse perhaps) to come together to decide through what lenses they might best observe children and to create a system whereby they can easily share their perception, if necessary simply on paper, preferably in meetings also. At present, in grades taught by teams or segregated specialists, a child is presented to herself/himself (and to parents) as a collection of spare parts which no one troubles to put together. If one attempts shared perceptions, common categories are required. This means that instead of being separately graded for language arts, science, art, etc., a child is looked at in terms of behavior right across all subjects. The very act of discovering some common lenses is a valuable way of bringing teachers together. Incidentally, it makes an asset out of what is usually a weakness, namely that in assessing other people we always describe ourselves, since it means that a child is now described in the terms of a groups of diverse adults.

For the single teacher in the self-contained classroom it would be useful at least to agree some lenses with colleagues, say those sharing the same corridor, so as to extend one's vision of what might be worth noticing in one's class. It isn't easy to select lenses, and I would very much like to see some of the main theoretical systems for analyzing human potential made available for teachers to use in this way. But in my experience groups of teachers always come up with interesting information categories even if the theoretical basis is not as clearcut as it might be.

An important aspect of this appraisal is the notion of praise. I expect there will one day be a time when we shall be sufficiently positive in our attitudes as a profession that we can afford to place equal emphasis on weaknesses and strengths, but at present we have such a backlog of negative evaluation to counter in ourselves and in educational tradition that I recommend that only positive qualities be noted in the shared checklist, at least until teachers become fully aware how revealing a checklist of relative strengths can be.

Under this kind of appraisal, once they have agreed some priorities to be looked out for during a period of perhaps a semester, teachers individually put a check mark whenever a child evinces a strength. So if Johnny is noticeably accurate and Jane is dextrous, if Rebecca has ideas and Robert enjoys putting other people's ideas into practice, if Luis works happily on his own and Shirley is most at ease working with other children, the teacher puts a check on his/her copy of a shared list, and gradually creates a profile of strengths to be shared with other teachers.

The main use of this kind of appraisal is that it guides future planning with and for a child. It is therefore a necessary supplement to the files of work kept on each child in most open classrooms. These files give an indication of the children's development to date, and are, of course, no less essential, but they are retrospective while the checklist is oriented to the future. Together they form a sound basis for the teacher's own assurance and for the reassurance of children and parents to face weaknesses with less consuming anxiety they are often prey to.

This kind of appraisal comes fully into its own only if it is properly articulated to both child and parents. For children in the grades where teachers operate in teams or independently as specialists, it is essential to set up an advisory system so that one person can become fully aware of a child's whole program, can see the child as a whole and can talk straight with him/her in honest, well-informed dialogue. How else can the student become a partner in setting up and carrying out a chosen learning program? Each student also needs to be confident that one person is always accessible, one who while not conniving will always act as sponsor and, if need be, as advocate, one with whom there can be some

special sense of belonging. In a generation where a main task is to help youngsters to move toward self-understanding it is painful to see children made the subject matter of conversations into which they have no entree either directly or through an advisor. At times it seems as if teachers have taken on the worst weaknesses of the most impersonal hospital practice. Children need the equivalent of a family doctor who will treat them as whole human beings and will consult them about their judgment of their situation as well as clinically observing their symptoms.

As for parents, we need to offer them something more systematic than semi-annual barrages of haphazard and hasty school reports. *In most schools the report system is an inept interruption of the teachers' task of observing children.* We know very well that we cannot report properly on dozens (in some cases hundreds) of children at any one time. Yet the fact that every child goes home with the same style of report at the same time actually ritualizes the event so that parents and youngsters take these hurried notes as sober judgment.

We do not as a rule need more reports on any one child than we provide at present, but after the first few weeks there should be a steady flow of reports going out throughout the school year.

In this way teachers can pay special attention to a proportion of their students at any one time and then move on to observe others equally carefully. Alphabetical order is harmless enough, but random ordering is preferable if it can be easily arranged. The result of year-long reporting is more efficient observation, much less agony or heady excitement among children, and reduced competitiveness among parents. It does not require more hours of work, merely a better use of energy.

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Documentation: an alternative approach to accountability

Patricia F. Carini

The flurry over evaluation of educational programs created by an atmosphere of change and innovation within the American school system and by the investment of large amounts of federal money in educational programs does not show signs of abating. The direction of most of the efforts in evaluation has been toward ever increased objectivity in assessment and toward the behavioral demonstration of achieved results. There has been considerably less attention given to such underlying issues as the relation (if any) of "results," such as early word recognition; to involvement or even skill in reading at later points or, for that matter, to the meaning of reading in relation to language as an organic and innate human process. Rather the efforts at evaluation, thus far, have generally reflected a pragmatic orientation in which efficiency has tended to be the covert, if not the overt, standard of judgment; that is, how fast or how early can a given skill or concept be taught or learned. It is not especially surprising in view of this orientation that evaluation has also tended to emphasize end-products rather than processes in making program assessments. Most generally, the end-products used to assess a given program are the achievements of the scholars.

There is considerable and growing resistance to this kind of evaluation, and as persons involved in alternative schools search for other ways of demonstrating their accountability, it may be an appropriate time to share the efforts of eight years of documenting an innovative school. There are several tenets underlying our procedure that require clarification.

We assume that the single most important factor in a program is that it be self-reflective, since reflection provides an informed basis for program evolution. Thus, it is not always so important to judge what a program looks like, or is accomplishing today, as to grasp what its potential is for ongoingness, continuity and renewal. We also assume that parts of a program cannot be judged in isolation, but only in their relationship to other parts of the program and to the program as a whole. Thus, the reflecting process can guard against lopsidedness, so that, e.g., a plan to modify the approach to reading would be viewed in relation not only to the many-faceted issue of language development, but also in relation to its effects upon the integrity of the total school program. Finally, we assume that as the program cannot be described or judged according to its isolated elements--that, in fact, to reduce a program to its elements, is to destroy it--it is also the case that persons--teachers, children, etc.--cannot be described or judged according to isolated behaviors. Thus, to describe the persons participant in the program is to establish the multiple network of the relationships that constitute their mutual reciprocity within the setting.

The implementation of these tenets in practice results in an account of the program that is biographical and historical in nature rather than directly evaluative. That is, the account presents the program to the interested reader or observer in its totality through sampling the program in all its facets and from the points of view of all the persons participant in it. As in all biographies and histories the validity of the account depends upon the faithfulness with which aspects and characteristics of the program are woven together to reflect not only factual happenings but the meaning and underlying dynamics of those happenings. In turn, the biography or documentation, as the description of the program that reflects its continuity and interrelatedness, can be the basis for evaluation according to any standard that an evaluator wishes to apply. That evaluation, however, now stands relative to the totality of the program, rather than as an absolute judgment rendered in isolation. Thus, if in the biography of a school program for intermediates there appears to me to be very little reported that would reflect a curriculum in history, that judgment must be made against, say, the background of all of the other curricular areas in which the group may have had deep involvement, such as drama, writing, natural science, music and drawing. If my own bias, or someone else's, is that all curricular areas should have equal coverage, the judgment that history is not being covered will be important, but it is also the case that other evaluators might consider curriculum coverage a relatively insignificant standard to apply to a program for children aged 8-10. In other words, the documentation, by making available the multiplicity of meanings inherent in such a complex human event as a school, forces a consideration of all the different points of view that can be brought to bear in assessing the appropriateness of a school program. In contradistinction to predetermined and singular standards of evaluation such as achievement tests, the documentation, by its nuance and richness, provokes a balanced reflection on the particularity and total meaning of any given program. As there can hardly be a claim that we have a science of education, this would appear to be the more humble and conservative approach to viewing our schools.

In our own instance, documentation has caused us to develop a variety of ways of recording activities, persons, and events. From those records we have described, among other things, such aspects of our school as its curriculum, the functions of such materials as sand, blocks, etc., for children of different ages, forms of play and the relationship of play to learning, and the development of drawing. We also have records to provide at a later date the biographies of children as readers, and a description of learning styles in early and late conserving children. The records from which these documentations are drawn include the following:

- Children's work, e.g., drawings, photos, etc.
- Children's journals[1]
- Teachers' journals
- Teachers' weekly records
- Classroom observations
- Teachers' reports to parents
- Curriculum trees

[1]This record applies only to children who are 11 years old or older.

. Sociograms
. Teachers' assessment of children's work in math, reading activities
. Children's notebooks

With the exception of classroom observations that are carried out by the research staff[2], the records are kept by the teaching staff. However, the preparation of documentary reports requires the assistance of outside personnel. In our settings, reports are prepared by the research staff, but other schools that have adopted the documentary model have involved administration personnel, parents, advisors, and other support personnel in the preparation of the documentary material. It should be noted that so long as the basic records are kept, they can be collated at any point in time, in a variety of ways, and in a more or less complete form depending upon available staff or on need. Thus, we have conceived the biographies of children as readers as a longitudinal study that can only be meaningfully collated after a significant number of children have completed the reading process at age 12 or 13. On the other hand, we document the evolution of the curriculum in simple form every three months. At the end of five years (1970), we prepared a comprehensive documentation of curriculum that will be revised and brought up to date in 1974-75, the tenth year of the program.

Since documentary accounts depend upon extensive and intensive sampling, it is difficult to convey these descriptions in brief form. However, at the risk of distortion, the remainder of this article will present representative samples from our documentation.

I. Documentation of Curriculum

A. Documentation of an involvement with local history among 11, 12, and 13-year-olds (excerpted)

1. *Description of Over-all Activities and Discussions*

[2]The Prospect School has maintained a research program since the school began in 1965. The program originally received federal support under the ESEA. Currently, the program is supported by a grant from the Rockefeller Family Fund.

Did gravestone rubbings, photography, drawings, doll project, ballad singing, contra-dancing, writing, note taking, reading
Visited Old Bennington First Church Cemetery, East Road Cemetery, Shaftsbury Cemetery, Old First Church, Old First Meeting House, Bike ride to Bennington Battlefield, Waloomsac Inn, Bennington Museum, Topping Tavern
Read Graven Images, Old First Church, Memorials of a Century, Battle of Bennington, Historic Sketches of Bennington. Group discussions of these readings and of epitaphs, symbolism, Puritan religion. Interviewed John Baker, Caroline Darlington.
Attended Mr. Welter's lecture on "Nature of History."

2. *Commentary from Teachers and Children on Graveyard Visits (excerpted)*

David Kelso (Teacher) - September

The kids' reaction to many of the questions surrounding the graveyards has been interesting. Perhaps the most direct revulsion was expressed when they saw the McCullough mausoleum in the Old First Church cemetery. The idea of empty drawers awaiting family members seemed to gall just about everyone. Kids were really responsive to the idea of death in a variety of forms. Dead children seemed to attract a fair amount of interest as did the questions of husbands dying before wives and vice versa.

Robert Frost[3] Discussion

Ned: Death doesn't bother me, but the things people say about it; and that mausoleum the McCulloughs have, just like it's sitting there waiting for them...

Pris: The blank drawers are for people who haven't died yet.

Ned: I want to be cremated, then I don't have to worry about maggots.

Karl: I would rather rot away. A plant might grow through you and then you would live again.

[3]Robert Frost is buried in the graveyard at Old First Church.

Ned: You're right.

Jacob: There's no way out of it, Ned.

David (Teacher): What's "it?"

Emily: He means there's no way out of death.

Jacob: Nah, no way out of being picked to pieces.

David (Teacher): It's something that's waiting for you when you die that's bothering you?

Jacob: Maybe you're really alive after you're dead, but your body just isn't functioning.

Karl: I think it will be interesting to see what happens. Lots of religions think there's a heaven or hell, or some other life.

Mary (Teacher): Do you remember how many religious quotations we saw at the cemetery?

David (Teacher): Why at the cemetery?

Emily: To remind you of a sadness...

David (Teacher): Yet some people would rather not be buried.

Emily: Nobody will forget you if you're buried; also, it reminds you that it will happen to you.

David (Teacher): Do people forget that they are going to die?

Karl: Yeah, you do. Now we're thinking about it and that's good. If you go through your life never thinking about death, it will be hard for you to accept it.

David Kelso's Journal - October 1971

We asked some kids to give what they thought was a suitable epitaph for themselves --

Forget
me
not.

Yesterday was so bright with hope
and promise for her. Then deep
in sleep she never woke.

Epitaph.

Here I lay
Here I stay
For the everlasting days.

The World is gone with all its good time + bad.
What will be next?

Too late, too late,
I am gone, I am dead.
Too late to say you are sorry,
for anything you have done.
I have gone into the eternal sleep,
from which no one ever returns.

3. Trips, Visitors, and Libraries Involved in the History project

Trips
Old First Church (1)
Old First Church Cemetery (3)
Shaftsbury Cemetery (3)
East Road Cemetery (1)
Hoosick Falls Cemetery (1)
Waloomsac Cemetery (1)
White Creek Cemetery (1)
Waloomsac Inn (1)
Topping Tavern (1)
Bennington Museum (1)
Bennington College (Indian Lecture) (1)
McCullough Mansion (x)
Bennington Battlefield
Caroline Darlington's House

Visitors
John Baker
Peter Maunsell
Rush Welter

Libraries
Bennington College
McCullough Library
Bennington Free Library

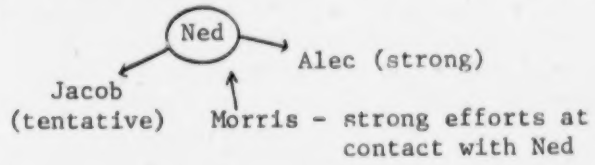
II. Documentation of a Child's Experience

A. Ned's School Experience from September - April: Excerpted from his journal and teachers' records

Ned (age 13/0; entered The Prospect School in

1966 at the age of 7)

1. Current Friendships



2. Mary Stevens' (Teacher) Journal

September 24, 1971
Ned is mostly with Jacob and Alec working on photography. He went on the trip to the Old First Church cemetery and was especially interested in the McCullough family drawers. He did a few rubbings and copied some epitaphs...

October 1
Ned did some more developing with Jacob and Alec. But he went on two cemetery trips and became quite involved in rubbings and copying down epitaphs. However, after about an hour he began to fool around with Alex and was ready to leave. On the second trip, he mainly followed Karl around to help with the pictures Karl was taking -- or take some of the pictures too.

October 5
I took a group to the Old First Church cemetery to get rubbings for the library -- used rice paper.

Ned and Karl did one together. Morris, Priscilla, Elizabeth and Alec each did one of their own.

In the afternoon we mounted rubbings -- Heidi worked on mushrooms.

October 8
Ned finished painting of gravestone in stone book -- beautiful, wants it mounted for library -- and so looked up what stone it is...

Ned still seems to really enjoy the cemetery trips, although his periods of actual work -- rubbing, etc. -- are somewhat brief. This week he went on both cemetery trips and spent most of his time exploring with Karl. He became quite disenchanted with the Hoosac cemetery, as he said it was too new and not interesting -- at which point he joined Karl's and Alec's campaign to go to an older cemetery. At the Old First Church cemetery he did a rubbing for the library with Karl. Later at school he mounted it and painted a face carving for one gravestone book at Kelso's request. He suggested it go to the library too, so he's mounting and labeling it so it will be ready...

3. Ned's Journal

November 18, 1971
Well, today I went up to the Merck Forest. This time my toes didn't freeze I wore three pairs of socks, but wouldn't you know it was a great day -- blue sky and no SNOW. We went up to the lodge. I had a good lunch -- we had a tracking game this time because Hugh couldn't stay. See one team would go out and lay a trail and the other team had to go after them and gather the things they used to blaze their trail.

4. Mary Stevens' Journal

October 28, 1971
I went to the Merck with six students -- Ned, Alec, Karl, Louise, Morris, Elizabeth, Per. Chris also drove -- it was a beautiful warm sunny day.

-- Per and Ned hiked with Chris to the hunting lodge.
-- Louis, Morris and I helped blaze a trail.
-- Karl and Alec did surveying.

After lunch Louise and I made tea from yellow birch and mint. We got back late but all went well.

November 8
Ned reads camping books -- digs camping...

November 21
Went to Merck forest -- lots (4") of snow -- a beautiful day. Looked for and discussed animal tracks in snow. Hugh came (Chris went with us) Karl, Emily, Louise, Ned and Alec...

5. David Kelso

I suppose that the point where I realized what a group we had become was at our own class Thanksgiving Dinner. This is certainly a holiday I am inclined to take quietly, but Karl decided that he really wanted to have a turkey dinner and proceeded to set one up. Mary and I were consulted only for minor details and certain

tactical approval. Everyone in the class was given a task -- from bringing food to securing a table cloth (that was me). Comparison shopping and per capita donation provided us with a fine bird. Tempers were rankled by the discovery that the bird had apparently not had the viscera included within. A call to the market apparently did not clear up the situation. But the plans and cooking plunged onward.

6. Ned's Journal

November 22, 1971
Today Karl hassled me about bringing my potatoes and carrots...We found out that we were gypped out of our heart, liver, and lungs (that was in our turkey). I CAN'T wait to eat that feast!

November 23, 1971
Well, today is Tuesday, I think? Today I worked in the kitchen, preparing things. I'm getting more and more hungry, every time I look at that turkey. We cooked the turkey for three or four hours and basted it every fifteen minutes. In the process of making mashed potatoes Emily dropped one on the floor and everybody walked on it. The girls started to set the table and I'm getting so hungry, I can't wait! Well I ate and ate and ATE! and by the time there was nothing left but the turkey's carcass I just couldn't move at all. WE WANT ALKA SELZER!

7. Books Ned read during the year

Pushcart War
Twenty-One Balloons
Narnia series
Witches Wit and a Werewolf
Beyond the Observatory
The Complete Walker
Harriet the Spy

8. Parent Report

January 2
I think that Ned has been one of the bright spots in our whole program. Ned has matured considerably and while I don't think that he has solved every problem that he may have, he has become more stable, more thoughtful and accessible, and more helpful. He just seems to be happier and the whole pace of the Middle School seems very much to suit his manner and temperment.

In terms of activities he has been heavily involved in the darkroom with Alex. He has done some good work here but needs to practice what he knows more regularly. He has been consistently involved in the outdoor program and this has provided him with some new avenues of relationships to other people. He has also worked quite a bit in the listening room. I am hopeful that this interest may grow as we add electronics equipment to the science area.

In more academic areas he has done very well. He has kept a fairly careful journal and this is perhaps the best record of his day to day activities. His work in math has been excellent and I would rank him near the top of the class. His reading seems to be a little more spotty but I would not be concerned with this at this point.

Sometimes I get the feeling that Ned's most serious problem (as he sees it), is getting himself to work on things. He is able to say that he knows that he should get things done without being told to and yet sometimes he doesn't. I would say that another potential problem which I have come to recognize is his tendency to skim the surface of many things and rarely get deeply into them. Only time will reveal whether this has been a program of only surfaces for Ned or whether in fact that is where Ned and all of us must, of course, begin.

9. Ned's Journal

January 28, Friday
We are planning an overnight up to the Merck. It is going to be a two-nighter. I also did some math today. I have started to work on a Greek myth thing. We went up to Woodford to ski. Some people went skating.

February 1
We went to the science building today. That was really fun. I read and did some math.

February 2
Today I worked on my "Greek God" chart. Dru started to work on it but changed her mind -- so it ended up that I am working on it by myself. So far I have done Zeus, Poseidon, and Hades. I also did some math and I read. We went to the Bennington Free Library (even though it isn't free). I took out a book about the II world war. I listened in the sound room too. Well that's about it.

February 3
Today I worked on my chart again. I did Hera Demeter Hestia. Tomorrow we are going skiing (we are all praying for snow). I did some math. Believe it or not today I cooked I attempted to make a Boston Cream Pie. It was an experience I shall never forget. It didn't come out so bad but I chickened out and bought some canned frosting. Well that's it for today so goodby.

February 4
Today I did my chart I did: Aphrodite, Ares, and Hephaestus. I read. I also worked in the sound room. We are planning a two-nighter to the Merck Forest. We went ICE skating, at the Frosts well that's about it.

February 7
Well, today I worked on my chart. I did: Cronus (Mary helped me with that one) Hermes, and Persephone. Everyday I get closer and closer to the end of the bloody THING!!! I also read and did some math well that's it.

February 8
Today, as always (for a while) I worked on my chart. I did: Athena and Apollo. We have started to work on the new darkroom and science area. Like I said we are planning an overnight. Most likely it will be the: 9th 10th and the 11th so

Other comments

Started Greek Mythology -- Discussion of how world created -- Trojan -- I read from Edith Hamilton. David said it needed more spark...

--Mary Stevens (Journal)
January 18, 1972

Celebrated Mozart's birthday. Started chart of Gods -- read Apollo's story -- birth...

--Mary Stevens (Journal)
January 27, 1972

Ned and I started a chart it had the Gods. I started Aphrodite...

--Dru (Journal)
January 27, 1972

Ned has been working especially hard lately on a large chart he is drawing of the Gods on Olympus. He is doing a beautiful job reproducing almost exactly the faces in Elizabeth's mythology book. He seems to enjoy it too, working on it whenever he has time of his won, mostly all morning and some afternoon time. I initially suggested to him that he draw it, but he has really taken the project over on his own.

. . . Morris also likes the mythology and likes to watch Ned draw his chart of the Gods and comment on how they work.

--Mary Stevens

. . . Ned is making a Family Tree of the gods and it is very good. Zeus is in the middle and his brothers are on one side and his wives are on the other. His sons and daughters are over his head, and the Titans are down below Zeus. Mary read something about the Olympics.

--Penny (Journal)
February 8, 1972

I guess I will be going on it. I also did reading writing and math. Well so long.

February 14
Today on my chart I did ARTEMIS, DIONYSUS, JAPET. I had a nice rest from the overnight at home. I read, I did some math. Like I said we went on the overnight, we have started to make the thing in the science area. Well that's about it for today so so long.

February 15
Today I:
FINISHED
=*IT! =
My chart that is. Mary helped me put it up and it looks good if I do say so myself**********
I also read and did some math
****

March 7
Today I worked in the sound room. I also read. I did a write-up on my Greek Gods' chart.

Ned finished his chart to the Greek gods and goddesses and it is beautiful, we put it up. He made a clay copy of King Tut's mummy and brought in some of his mother's paints to paint it. He did another beautiful job, all gold and blue.

Ned finished a good write-up on the Greek Gods and Titans. He copied it out in good script with only a few spelling mistakes.

--Mary Stevens (Journal)

10. Mary Stevens (Teacher) — Journal

...Ned recovered the whole listening room with sound-proofing, mostly by himself. He likes listening there a lot, and playing chess.

Ned's Journal

February 14, 1972
We have started to make that thing in the science area.

February 17
Today I helped getting the science room together. Well it is really a science room and darkroom in ONE. Karl and Alec are making a thing for it...

February 18
We finished the darkroom and science room...

March 2
Today I worked on putting some shelves up. It was deadly. I also read. I worked on the science thing and I built a loudspeaker...

Mary Stevens' Journal

Ned went on the second book-shopping trip and picked out two movie books, both too expensive. He then settled for The Earth Abides by George Stewart, a science fiction book. He promptly put the book away in the new cubbie he fixed up, where I noticed he had his own whole set of C. S. Lewis' Narnia series.

11. David Kelso's Journal

(February 28) Ned and Penny went with me to get water samples for college. Tuesday we'll be testing salt content with Duncan Campbell. We went to Paran Creek and McCullough Woods.

12. Mary Stevens' Journal

Ned also went on the college trips. He drew some of the human slide structures he observed and liked helping Duncan Campbell (who was working in the lab) with the salt test to see how much salt is getting into streams from roads. /Ned went this week to the college labs to do the water testing. He looked at some of the dirt filtered out of the water under the microscope and wrote about if in his notebook./This morning Ned went on a hike down Waloomsac to get water samples. He spent most of the time walking along singing silly and somewhat risque type songs with Per and Jacob. Ned likes to help Duncan set up tests. He also does a lot of recording each time in his notebook -- has trouble multiplying by decimal points.

III. Documentation of Materials and Activities for Ages 5-14

A. Analysis of the Functions and Extensions of Water

The Inner Experience	Water	Extensions to Other Activities	Extensions to Skills and Curriculum
expressing, rhythm	A. pouring, dripping, funneling	dyes; mixing and cooking; pouring other liquids (oil)	measuring; capacity
expressing, trying roles, imagining	B. small worlds and dramatic play - boats, sinking, bridges	other media - blocks, sand, drawing, legos	language, writing geography
observing, creating, transforming	C. aquaria, fish, terraria, raising fish, snails, turtles, under-water plants, rain cycles	drawing; gardens; nature study	geography, undersea research; charts
imagining, expressing, representing	D. Seas and the underwater world - life in the sea - depths	drawing; writing; stories; skin diving; fish; myths; sea monsters; lakes and rivers; records of whales; sea birds dance; music	research; measurement writing; simple experimental reports
observing, changing, transforming, analyzing	E. complex experimentation and engineering tides; locks; displacement; bridges; water wheels; canoes and kyaks; dams and canals	drawings; maps; charting rivers; nature study; comparison of the attributes of other liquids; boats	math; plans, charts
observing, analyzing	F. water testing	drawings; microscopic studies; comparisons; analyses; ecology	math; plans; charts; research; chemistry
observing, changing transforming	G. simple experimentation; coloring water; melting and freezing; evaporating; steam	charts; coloring snow; freezing colored ice; ice cream; popcorn; oil and water; bottle gardens; melting wax; sugar, etc; freezing substances; cooking; softening and hardening water; music	research; measurement writing; simple experimental reports

Such documentation has had its impact on shaping our program through the questions it raises. For example, certain themes such as the transformation of physical events (metamorphosis of butterflies and frogs, volcanoes, bread, etc.) are recurrent in our curriculum for children of all ages, whereas we have found little spontaneous interest in history before the age of 12. What does this tell us about the children's interests and potentialities and materials appropriate for their use? Some children learn to read early and easily. Does this correlate with later pleasure in reading? Many of our boys are disinterested in reading at age six, but are deeply involved in drawing, spoken language and dramatics. How does this relate to the reading process, and the development of language and thought? The list of questions could be extended indefinitely, but, in brief, the documentation provokes our thought and informs our reflections. That is, quite apart from the information that the documentation provides for the evaluation of the program as it has been, it is the vital source for providing an ever more responsive setting for children as our understanding of them deepens.

Patricia Carini is director of the Prospect School in North Bennington, Vermont.

Evaluating African science: case in point

Eleanor Duckworth

The questions with which we think evaluations should be concerned are asked, with great elegance, by the evaluation conducted of the African Primary Science Program. The following is excerpted from that evaluation.

The African Primary Science Program has been developed in eight different African countries and is currently in the initial stages of implementation in these countries.

The program is characterized by an orientation which is very different from most science teaching. Rather than being concerned with children's ability to restate summaries of what professional scientists have learned about the world, the African Primary Science Program would like children to know the world on their own terms - how it looks, how it acts, how it can be transformed, how it can be maintained, what they can do with it, how to make tools that enable them to find out more. The people involved in this program would like children to have their own ideas of interesting ways to use materials that are available to them, of interesting questions to ask about things, and of ways to go about answering their questions. They would like children to have confidence in their own ideas, so they do things on their own initiative, and not simply when they are told.

In brief, they would like children to be familiar enough with their world, to be interested enough in it, and to be confident enough of themselves to be able to use what they know and to go beyond it to new learning.

The people involved in this program believe that there are many aspects to finding out about the material world, some of which do not, on the surface, look very much like science as we usually understand that term.

Learning is not simply a matter of solving a specific problem that has been raised. Learning occurs in many other ways as well, and all of them have a place in this program.

Sometimes children do have specific questions in mind and think of experiments that will help them the answers to those questions. For instance, they may wonder whether the brightness of a small bulb will change if they make the wire longer or shorter, and they can answer this question by using a single bulb and a single battery, with the wire always attached in the same way, and varying only the length of the wire.

Other times they may not have a specific question in mind but may think of something to do just to see what will happen. For instance, they might think of trying to boil a piece of bark from a tree with no particular idea in mind ahead of time about what might happen.

Other times they may simply watch what happens around them. For instance, they might watch an insect going back and forth carrying food, and they might pay attention to how it moves, or how it picks up the food, or the path it takes, or what kind of foods it takes, or whether it pays attention to any other insects around it.

On other occasions they may not seem to be interested in finding out anything but simply in accomplishing some practical aim, like trying to make an egg roll in a straight line; or trying to build some symmetrical pattern. In cases like this they learn as they realise that certain ways do not work and as they look for other ways that might work.

Still other times they may simply be trying to consolidate what they seem to know already. One form that this can take is to make a model of something that they know, much in the same way as the astronomers of the Renaissance in Europe built models that represented their understanding of the way the heavenly bodies moved. Chemists of the nineteenth century built models to represent their understanding of atoms and molecules. In a certain sense, these could be seen as toys - as playthings - and they even appear as such to us when we see them in museums. But for the person who is constructing them, they demand rigorous intellecutal effort. They demand an understanding of the total phenomenon that they represent, and they demand that each detail be in its place.

For children, letting one thing stand for another makes similar demands. For instance, a child may use spools for wheels and sticks for axles, and scraps of wood for a cart. As he tries to put these together so that the wheels really do turn, he will be reproducing and consolidating what he understands of wheels and axles.

Even playing house serves the same purpose for young children. The more children strive to make representational play correspond to the real world, the more they understand that real world.

Learning also involves the sharing of knowledge, building on one another's ideas, through talking, drawing, writing and reading, or collaborating on a problem together. This capacity for sharing has to be learned, also. Children must develop respect for each other's ideas and the capacity to pay attention to each other.

All these kinds of activities have a place in the African Primary Science Program. Two main tendencies run through these various ways of learning. On the one hand, children need to have lots of ideas - of questions to ask, of practical things to do, of experiments to do just for fun, of ways to try to represent something. On the other hand, they need to develop some rigor in order to judge when indeed they have learned something, or when their representation is adequate. In psychological research, these two main tendencies are sometimes called "divergent thinking" - producing many different ideas in a given situation - and "convergent thinking" - working through all the possible ideas to find the best one for the situation.

Neither of these types of thinking can develop in a vauum. Children need to know enough about materials to produce ideas about interesting things to do with them, as well as to judge which are the most appropriate ideas. This program, then, attempts to have children know about the material world in a way that enables them to produce many ideas about it, and to judge their ideas.

Those who have been involved in this program believe that in order to know the world in this way, with a knowledge that leads out beyond itself, it is more important for children to investigate a small area thoroughly than to skim superficially over many phenomena. Topics of study have been developed that usually take the form of units of work that last 10 or 12 lessons. These units are based on commonly available resources, like local insects, cooking substances, soils, water, flower petals. The materials are presented in such a way that children become intrigued with doing things with them that they had not done before, and in finding out more about them. Thus, they are encourage and helped to pursue their lines of interest.

It is not considered important that each child learn the same things as every other child. What is considered important is that each child be involved in learning for himself, day by day. This is seen as the best way for children to be prepared to continue doing their own learning, outside school, and after they leave school.

PROBLEMS OF EVALUATION

It will come as no surprise to say that the task of evaluating such a program is not easy. For one thing, no two children are likely to have done the same things, or to have learned the same things. For another thing, the facts that children learn are not considered to be the most important thing. What is important is the children's ability to go beyond specifics to raising questions of interest to explore. Our question, as evaluators, was to find out to what extent what the different children have done and learned is important in their ability to go still further with their learning. Does this kind of science teaching really give children a better basis for going further on their own than other kinds of science teaching?

This question really can be answered only over a long period of time. The real result, of course, must be sought in the adult lives that these children will lead. Are they more productive, do they do things for themselves, are they interested in continuing their learning, are they able to think about decisions that will affect them and their communities? We would like to think about a study of this sort, to be carried out over many years, and the chairman of the group, Dr. Yoloye, includes such a possibility in his view of what might be done in evaluation in the long run.

We felt, however, that it would be interesting to try to do something sooner, as well. The single largest contribution of the evaluation team so far has been to develop an instrument to examine classes of children who have been in the Program for some time, to see to what extent they have made progress toward these goals. (For a more detailed report than the summary that follows, see "A Comparison Study for Evaluating Primary School Science in Africa.")

We decided to compare some of those children who have been taught by teachers in the Program for one to three years with children who had not been taught by teachers in the Program. The first group of teachers had the use of written guides, and training from science educators or from experienced teachers. In the judgment of the local science educators, they were doing a good job. The scond group did not even know about the Program.

Teachers have often remarked that as children continue learning in this program, they get better and better at suggesting ideas and at doing things for themselves. We want to see if this was generally true.

We decided to see what a class of children who had had this experience for a year or more would do with materials when they were left to their own resources, without any teacher at all. Our idea was that if children really were learning how to do things for themselves, and learning to trust their own ideas, and learning about the material world, they would act differently from other children who, in school, were still doing only what they were told to do, and learning other people's ideas.

We chose materials that children in the Program had not been studying. That certainly would have put them at an advantage over the children with whom we were comparing them. Instead, we chose some materials which none of the children had ever seen - plastic color filters, geometric pattern blocks, folding mirrors, commerical building sets, for example. We also chose some materials that are familiar to children whether or not they have been in the Program - cigarette foil, match boxes, rubber rings from inner tubes, scraps of wire and wood and metal, empty cotton spools, and so forth.

We could not watch a whole class of children at a time; so we chose a dozen from one class, having each child write his name on a piece of paper, and pulling out 12 names by chance.

We laid out the materials in a room in the school and then told the 12 children, in their own vernacular, to go into the room, and do whatever they wanted to do with the materials which were there. We told them that they could move around the room, and that they could talk to each other, and that they could work with their friends.

We did this in classes from Standards I through V which had been in the Program, and Standards I through VII which had not been in the Program. Since there were several classes at each of the grade levels, this meant that we studied about 40 classes.

We found that the children who had been in the Program did indeed have many ideas about how to work with these materials. They usually moved into the room quite directly, looked at the various tables to see what was there, tried a few things, and then started to work at something with involvement and concentration. Children sometimes worked alone and sometime collaborated. Every child had ideas of what he might do. A great variety of different things were done in one class. Materials were used in combinations that the adults had never thought of before. They were used in combinations that the adults had never thought of before. They were used not only on their original tables, but were carried about the room to be used in combinations with other materials. By the end of the 40 minutes, children were producing more and more ideas, and were always sorry to have to stop.

In contrast to this, classes which had not been in this program had a much smaller range of ideas. These children tended to do simple things, and to copy one another. There were often several children who simply never did anything constructive. They spent the whole time timidly watching others, touching things from time to time, but never committing themselves to anything. In some of these classes, after 25 to 30 minutes, all the children had run out of ideas, and had nothing left to do. There were very few instances of elaborate work where a child spent a lot of time and effort to overcome difficulties in what he was trying to do.

There was one other aspect to this evaluation. The 40 minutes of free time told us about the resourcefulness, the concentration, and the self confidence of children in these different classes - how readily they were able to find out about new things, and what ideas they had about using familiar things. We undertook another aspect, to see how they compared in their ability to think through and solve a problem that we gave them to do. The problems were ones that children of certain ages find difficult to solve, but that adults on the whole do not find difficult. We knew that children usually develop very slowly in their ability to solve problems like these, and that almost no special "training" can help them to do better. But we thought that children who had been in the Program for two or three years and had been thinking through problems on their own during the science activities might, over that long period of time, develop better ways than others.

There was only one class which had been doing science activities in the Program for three full years. This class did very much better on these problems than any other class of that level. Furthermore, we compared their results with three different classes of children one year older, and they did better than these older classes. Of course, we cannot draw final conclusions from one class, but this is a very encouraging indication of long range effects.

Children who had been in the Program for one or two years did slightly better, on the average, than other children the same age who had not been in the Program, although the difference was much less striking.

CONCLUSION

There are two major aspects to a complex job. One is the inventive aspect - having ideas about possible ways to do it. The other is the evaluative aspect - being able to tell how these ideas are working, which ones to keep, which ones to discard, and which ones to change.

Teaching is always a complex job. A good teacher must constantly be inventive - thinking of different ways to help different children, thinking of ways to use new books or equipment which become available, thinking of ways to overcome difficulties he has met previously. Good tutors, education officers, inspectors and advisors must be inventive in the courses they offer, the books

they write, the suggestions they make when they visit. Responsible ministry officials must be inventive in the programs they recommend, in the ways they think of for teachers to help each other, in the ways they plan for change, and in the ways they relate education to the overall needs of their nation.

The goals of all these people are exceedingly long range - affecting the lives the children may lead in the future, what these children may do for their communities and their fellow citizens. No educators can afford to wait until the children grow up before judging the effectiveness of their ideas. They must have indications they can use as they go, which will show that, in the long run, they are progressing toward their goals.

Good examinations can serve to give indications about the amount of information children have gained. But even the best examinations cannot reveal the way children are developing in other important areas. There must be different ways to judge the progress.

As evaluators, we have sought to provide indicators that people can use to help them judge their progress as they go. For teachers, whose work with their pupils is the most central influence in the educational process, we have tried to suggest indicators that they can use in their classrooms day by day. For those whose job is to help teachers, we have tried to provide ways for them to judge the effectiveness of the courses, the writing, and the suggestions they offer to teachers. For ministry officials, we have tried to provide ways of judging how well this program as a whole can help large numbers of teachers to help children become competent, confident, resourceful individuals.

Since the Program is very long range - can never, in fact, come to an "end" - it is important to have questions all along the way that people can ask themselves, to judge whether the project is making progress toward what it is trying to do.

Asking those questions, and figuring out ways to answer them, has been the main job of this evaluation team.

Eleanor Duckworth is coordinator of the Lighthouse Learning Project, an attempt by the Atlantic Institute of Education in Halifax, Nova Scotia, to improve education in the Atlantic Coast Provinces of Canada.

Report from North Dakota

Vito Perrone

Vito Perrone is Dean of the Center for Teaching and Learning which since July 1972 has replaced the New School for Behavioral Studies as the teacher education facility at the University of North Dakota.

When we first started at the New School, we established a classroom environment where each one of our first group of students, most of whom had extensive teaching experience in relatively traditional classrooms, had responsibility for one child for approximately one hour per day. Large numbers of the teachers indicated to me that they had never been that deeply involved with a child before. Many were uncomfortable. I was surprised at the time. I shouldn't have been. That experience, among others, led us to focus considerable attention on increasing the ability of teachers to observe what children do, the ways they interact with others, with materials, etc. We have come to look upon such observation, and the reflection that relates to it, as basic to evaluation.

As our interaction with children became more intense, and this is one of the outcomes of intensifying the levels of personalization, it became clear that children have a very good sense of what is happening to them in the classroom setting and can provide teachers with good feedback about the learning environment that exists and their response to it. Nancy Miller, a member of our staff, helped us capitalize on this. She became involved in children's interviews several years ago and has provided many of us with valuable insights about children's responses to their classrooms. Some examples from her work might be instructive.

In one classroom in Chicago, where Nancy was a participant-observer, teachers spend, as she relates, considerable energy talking about a fourth grade child who spent most of her time "bothering

veryone." In an interview with the youngster, ancy asked about how she used her time in the lassroom. Her response was: "All I do is both- r everyone." She knew exactly what she was about! nd yet, the teachers "wasted" months talking *bout* her and not *with* her. An interview with a hird grade child from that same Chicago setting as also been very instructive. The young girl ncreasingly withdrew as the months transpired. gain teachers talked about her and the fact that he spent much of her time sitting in a far cor- er, doing very little. In April, Nancy asked her bout the room, the various learning centers, and he materials. The child said she didn't know how o use the materials, wasn't sure what other chil- ren were doing, didn't know what questions to ask, nd felt "the teacher was always busy with some- ne else."

Several weeks ago Clara Pederson, another member f our staff, gave the Children's Interview to several children in one of our Follow Through lassrooms. One boy, in response to a question bout what he wanted to do in the classroom, said e really wanted to take apart an alarm clock and ut it back together, but "I can't do that here." There were similar responses from other children. The teacher was delighted to have this feedback (she commented that she "should have been more ware of that") inasmuch as she gained some per- pective on what was happening, and not happening, r the children. Clara visited the classroom o weeks later to find the youngster working on a alarm clock. And a learning center devoted to "things to take apart and put together" was being used by many children.

In similar fashion, we began to engage ourselves with parents very early in our program, a process which has also given some direction to our evalu- ation. Parents in North Dakota had been kept at arm's length by the schools, safely within the confines of passive parent-teacher groups. Their interactions with schools had been minimal. Yet, as all of us have found, they have unique insights into what is happening to their children in school, about which they are eager to talk.

II

In 1971-72, principally because of the encourage- ment of the Trainers of Teacher Trainers (TTT) program, we began an intensive program evaluation. I am not sure we could have engaged in such a process earlier. Our efforts, which involved virtually everyone in the New School, provided a time to pull together much of what we had learned previously and helped establish the directions that now dominate our evaluation effort. The evaluation addressed itself to the impact of the New School's program upon prospective and experi- enced teachers, children, and parents. The focus was on the following:[1]

1. What is happening in New School classrooms? The children's perspective.

2. What is happening in New School classrooms? The teacher's perspective.

3. The parent and New School classrooms.

Three instruments were developed. The *Children's Interview*[2] is made up of completely open-ended questions about the child's perception of activi- ties in the classroom and his/her involvement in the activities, the teacher's activities and inter- action with the child, peer interaction and activi- ties, some of the child's likes, dislikes and gen- eral feelings about the classroom, and the child's interactions outside of the school in which school is discussed. Our particular interest in the anal- ysis is: the child's role in the classroom and contribution to his/her own learning; the child's perception of the teacher's role and his/her rela- tionship to the teacher; the contribution of class- room as an overall learning environment and his/her relationship to that environment.

The *Teacher's Interview*[3] is an intensive instru- ment which probes the following areas: classroom activities, materials, scheduling, arrangements, and organization; diagnostic and student evaluation approaches; student peer interaction; student- peer interaction; student-teacher interaction and

[1]A fourth focus, "The School as an Organizational Structure," is not included here inasmuch as its purpose was very narrow, applicable principally to the New School program in North Dakota.

[2]The present Children's Interview instrument is a revision of an interview instrument developed by Nancy Miller as part of a Chicago Follow Through Research Project under the direction of Dan Scheinfeld.

[3]We were provided assistance by Marianne Amarel, Edward Chittenden, and Anne Bussis, from ETS, in the development of our Teacher Interview.

relationships; classroom problems, difficulties and high points; the teacher's goals; the teacher's reactions to some general New School goals as related to his or her own experiences in the classroom; the teacher's relationships, experiences and interaction pattern with parents, and perceptions about the community environment in which the classroom operates; and changes in the classroom over the course of the year in all of the preceding.

In the analysis of the interview we are particularly interested in variations in the range of stimuli offered the children, the degree and nature of individualization in the classroom, the relationships between the teacher and the children in both non-specific and instructional situations with particular attention to decision making in the classroom, the relationship between the community and the classroom, the role of peer interaction in the learning environment, the ways in which goals are relevant and meaningful to the teacher and the children, and the level and nature of change over the course of the year.

The *Parent Interview* is aimed at a description and understanding of: the parent's information about the classroom including sources of information; the parent's perceptions of and attitudes about what is happening in the classroom; the parent's degree and kinds of involvement in the classroom; and parents' overall level of support for (or hostility toward) the New School approach as manifested in their child's classroom.

In order to complete the more formal aspects of the program evaluation, the responses to the interviews were scaled in relation to the following structure and process dimensions: decentralization, informality, individualization, diversification, peer interaction, integration, and community resource-use.

While it won't serve our purpose to describe all of the formal results of our interviews, a summary might be of interest. New School intern teachers established relationships with children and initiated classroom practices which were reasonably consonant with the goals of the preparation program. Their practice was clearly distinguishable, in positive ways, from teachers who had not been part of the New School program. (This was established through the use of a mail questionnaire which correlated closely to the teacher interview.) More specifically, we found that New School intern classrooms were characterized by a relatively high level of peer interaction, diversification, informality, and individualization. We also found intern classrooms to be somewhat less decentralized, less integrated, and less community-resource oriented than appears desirable in light of the New School's advocacy of more open processes of education. Decentralization and integration demand less adherence to more formal curriculum structures which are organized around such areas as reading, language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, art, etc.

While the intern teachers were moving away from such structures, formal curriculum, a long established practice in most of the schools in which the interns taught, still appeared to be a major constraint. As several teachers indicated, reading and math, in particular, had to be organized separately to meet the minimal expectations of the school system. And while New School intern teachers did make some beginnings in enlarging the community-resource base, few were as responsive to the community as is desirable from our point of view. I suspect we didn't provide sufficient assistance to this group of intern teachers. In addition, most of the intern teachers were struggling to meet children well. Expecting a major community effort, at this point, might have been unrealistic. Teachers, we find, become more effective in utilizing community resources as they become more secure about themselves in a more open classroom setting. This often takes from two to five years.

More should be said. In spite of the fact that New School interns were less community-resource oriented than many of us would have liked, they did openly encourage parents to come to their classrooms and many made a number of home visits. As was clear from the parent's interview, a majority of parents visited the classrooms. For most, this was a new experience. "Opening the doors" to parents is a positive orientation for teachers to hold, but as many of our intern teachers found, it carries some risks. New School intern teachers were subject to far greater scrutiny--sometimes open criticism--because they kept their doors open to the outside. Some parents who visited stood back, did not interact with children or materials, remained less than an hour and went away hostile. Those who interacted with children came to the classroom prepared to do something

and tended to be enormously positive. All of us learned a great deal from the variety of parent responses to the classrooms; for example, we learned more about how to positively involve parents in the classroom, the ways in which teacher and child expectations effect their attitudes, and how parents express their feelings about classrooms. (See Mike Patton's statement in the December 1972 *Notes*.)

III

We are quite satisfied with the overall results of the formal program evaluation and feel we can go forward with greater confidence. But even more important, the interview process has opened up a number of enlarged evaluation possibilities. For example, those who were engaged in the Teacher's Interview often commented that "it was the most intensive learning experience I have had in years...I have learned more about myself as a teacher than I ever knew." We look upon the Teacher's Interview now not only as a way to assess the quality of activity in the classroom but as a significant tool to assist teachers in assessing what they are about in the classroom, reflecting on their experience, considering alternatives and setting new learning goals.

The Children's Interview and Parent's Interview also provoked positive responses from teachers. Parents were pleased to engage in the interview. For many of them it was the first time anyone had made inquiries about their reaction to their children's experience. It also proved to be a good vehicle to bring teachers and parents together. In one community a follow-up session relating to the Parent Interview proved to be one of the finest parent workshops any of us have engaged in. Parents did not seem threatened, they talked freely about the various responses they provided interviewers, at times clarifying their concerns. Parents viewed the follow-up discussion as an excellent means of increasing their understanding of education.

The potential of the three instruments for extended staff development and parent education seems very high. We are committing ourselves to revising the Teacher, Child and Parent Interviews in order to provide more rapid feedback. We believe that more immediate feedback to teachers and parents will assist them in their basic understanding of the classroom and their respective roles.

Open-ended guides

Earlier this school year, a New York City district office developed a detailed reading diagnostic instrument for grades 1 and 2 for use in all first and second grade classrooms in that district. After reviewing it, the City College Advisory Service to Open Corridors found the instrument lacking on two counts. It did not include sufficient possibilities for assessing particular aspects of a child's development that lead into reading, e.g., a child's use of language, symbolic development, and physical health, all of which are crucial considerations in beginning reading. Further, it was felt, the instrument would impose unnecessary work on the teacher because of the large number of details to be checked.

The Advisory, therefore, organized a study group to think through the specific components of the reading process that needed to be included in such an instrument. Most important, we considered ways of grouping isolated skills into composite wholes so as to make it possible for a teacher to observe aspects of development as a whole and to disregard many items if a child's performance indicates he is proficient in what these items specify.

Our instrument was offered to the district as a diagnostic tool and guide which would be especially useful and relevant to the work in Open Corridor classrooms. The district not only adopted it as the instrument to be used in our classrooms, it suggested that other classrooms use it as well.

Martha Norris

A Guide for Reading Assessment: Grades 1 and 2

The whole repertoire of reading skills must be understood by the teacher and available for her use as needed. Listing these in a diagnostic instrument should not imply that every skill is needed before the child reads. The diagnosis is used to find out how the child is trying to learn, the strengths he has, what he is good at. There are many different ways to learn to read.

Oral language, fostered by a context of meaning and interest, is primary. All test words should be offered in a context of meaning. The diagnosis will not tell you grade level, but give information of *how* the child is trying to read so that continuity in growth of reading can be fostered. This is also related to the experience skills the child is developing through his personal writing and spelling experience.

The teacher is reminded that while this list is helpful, no checklist is adequate to the teacher's understanding of where the child is--what his unique learning process is. In order to find the child's individual process it is important to engage the child in conversations and experiences that will elicit this information, e.g., What made you think that? How do you know it?

It is recommended that the teacher use the Kindergarten list for a child who has difficulty mastering the simpler items on the list, and in the teacher's view, needs a great deal more prereading experience.

Child's Name:_____ Grade_____
Teacher:_____
Academic Year:_____
Type of Reading Program (if any) used with this Child: (e.g. Merrill Linguistic, Bank Street)
_____

General Information to Note About Child

1. Has difficulty in communicating his need for help. (If yes, note clues.)_____
2. Has difficulty in accepting help. (If yes, note clues.)_____
3. Vision._____
4. Hearing._____
5. Motor Coordination: large -- jumping, skipping, catching, hopping;_____
   descriptive work for general mode:
   fine -- how child uses manipulative materials, sewing, scissors, drawing, pouring._____
6. Other language spoken (note extent of) at home, with peers._____
7. Previous schooling._____
8. Shows specific interests (e.g., baseball, collections, sewing)._____
9. Stick-to-it-iveness: (Note which areas or activities)._____

Language Interaction

1. Is primarily nonverbal_____
   a. Note situations where child *is* verbal.__
   b. In what other ways does he try to communicate?_____
2. Responses to child and teachers that follow from listening._____
3. Conversation is intelligible (highly idiosyncratic)._____
4. Communicates with a very limited vocabulary. _____
5. Converses easily with adults._____
6. Converses easily with peers._____
7. Uses adjectives extensively; uses descriptive details: color, shape, size._____

The following form is to be used as a guide for understanding how the child is trying to learn, the strengths he has, what he does well, in order to plan an effective reading program for him.

The items are not necessarily in a sequential order, nor are all items relevant to all children. For those children (fluent readers) who have already mastered most or all of the unstarred items, particular attention should be placed on the starred (*) items.

The headings are not necessarily discrete, and many of the items overlap.

KEY: *If you have not observed an item leave it blank.*

1. Not yet in evidence.
2. Is making progress *or* sometimes in evidence.
3. Has mastered *or* frequently in evidence.

Notations should be made in column headed COMMENTS, especially when rating 2 is used.

	#	DATE	COMMENTS
SYMBOLIZATION			
1. Can categorize a variety of materials (objects, pictures).			
2. Uses blocks or other materials to replicate *real*			

	#	DATE	COMMENTS
life situations or fantasy, (puppets, clay).			
3. Does representational paintings or drawings._____			
4. Uses organized patterns in paintings or drawings._____			
5. Knows that written words stand for spoken words: names, signs._____			
6. Differentiates between letters and words._____			
7. Knows that letters or groups of letters stand for sounds.___			
VISUAL			
1. Matches: a. Letters _____ Words _____			
b. Visual Memory (i.e., remembers right after stimulus is removed). objects, pictures _____ Letters _____ Words _____			
2. Identifies: a. Letters when named by teacher. _____			
b. Letters by name. _____			
c. Name process with upper and lower case letters (Aa) _____			
3. Uses L-R progression on printed page. _____			
4. Sight vocabulary:			
a. Personal words			
b. Minimal sight vocabulary of 50-100 most common words (e.g., Dolch list). _____			
*c. Knows almost all common sight words (e.g., Dolch list).			
*5. Reads with minimal assistance (give example). _____			
*6. Makes connections between words within existing sight vocabulary (initial letters, configurations, roots, patterns). _____			
AUDITORY			
1. Matches sounds (clapping, tapping, nonsense songs, sound cylinders). _____			
2. Recognizes rhyming sounds._____			
3. Hears similarities in beginning sounds _____			
4. Identifies beginning sounds._____			
*5. Identifies final sounds and rhyming patterns._____			
*6. Uses other auditory clues to read words (root words, medial sounds, etc.)._____			
LANGUAGE COMPREHENSION (Oral and Written)			
1. Can respond relevently in informal conversation._____			
2. Demonstrates ability			

	#	DATE	COMMENTS
to handle a short sequences of directions._____			
3. Storytelling:			
a. Can re-tell, or act out simple stories._____			
b. Can recall significant details of story (descriptions of characters, names, events).			
As records pile up, teachers should select samples.			
c. Makes connections between the story and other stories, characters, real life events or situations._____			
*4. Shows ability to tackle new words. Uses contextual, phonetic, or structural clues._____			
*5. Can answer questions pertaining to literal facts: sequence_____ inference_____			
ATTITUDES TOWARD READING			
*1. Spontaneously seeks opportunities to use books._____			
2. Asks to be read to._____			
3. Shows interest in: printed words in class environment _____ dictating stories _____ making books _____			

	#	DATE	COMMENTS
labeling paintings, constructions_____ message or note writing_____			
4. Responds effectively to stories (laughs, shows surprise, fright, anger)._____			
5. Is aware of a variety of reading materials. (books, magazines, comics, newspapers, baseball cards)._____			
6. Uses books as a source of information._____			
7. Reads books for pleasure. How frequently?_____ Which ones?_____			

Open Corridor Teacher's Diagnostic Instrument

In this instrument we are trying to provide a guide for self-assessment or assessment by the supervisor. We see a teacher's growth as a progression. Therefore, the following five-point scale has been devised:

1. Shows no evidence of this.
2. Has made beginning steps in this direction.
3. Continues to show growth toward this, but needs improvement.
4. Has reached a high level of capability.
5. Has reached an exceptional level of achievement.

There are some aspects of a teacher's understanding of child development which cannot be included in this type of instrument, but are fundamental to the framework within which she works. The following excerpts from the Proposal for the City College Workshop Center for Open Education indicate our expectations of the volunteer teacher.

"The implementations that reflect the participants' growing understanding of open education are developed unevenly and dependent on his or her own interests, focus, and developmental

starting point. They reflect a growing understanding of what is involved in the support of the individual, active, selective and uneven nature of a child's learning. They reflect a growing understanding of the inextricable mesh of the intellectual, emotional, and physical aspects of a child's development. The participant makes changes that reflect a growing understanding of the importance to a child's learning of the physical environment and of the impact of the individuals in the environment on each other. The understandings result in the participant's changed view of her responsibilities and are reflected in changed classroom organization, in curricular planning that relates to the observed use of materials by the children, and in changed recording. These changes occur (and the process of teacher change is supported) within school conditions which begin perhaps only minimally with permission but move gradually toward facilitation of open education.

"Each participant starts with his or her own interests, focus, pace and pattern of learning and from his or her own baseline developmental starting point of understanding, competence and performance. What the participant selects from what is offered at the workshop depends on those factors. Because of these differences, participants' growth may very well be uneven and not reach out into all parameters, and it is one of our assumptions that growth does not proceed evenly."

It is important that teachers use the items on the list that follows as a basis for making jottings of their own work in the classroom, either as part of their regular planning and recording system or in a special arrangement of notes. We assume there will be many informal visits by the supervisor to familiarize herself/himself with the teacher's way of working and that observations from the visits will be shared with the teacher. These informal visits and discussions with the teacher should take place throughout the year prior to, as well as following, any formal observation in the classroom.

In order to evaluate the teacher in Category I, Planning and Preparation of Classroom Environment, and in Category III, Outcomes, it is necessary for the supervisor to examine the teacher's planning and recording notes. The evaluation of growth in Categories II, Teacher Intervention in Child's Learning Experience, IV, Classroom/Management, and V, Professional Growth, depends upon classroom observation by the supervisor over a period of time.

Date of Assessment_____

Teacher's Name_____ Grade Taught_____

Supervisor's Name_____

No. of visits prior to assessment_____

No. of years of teaching experience_____

No. of years at this grade level_____

No. of years in the Open Corridor Program_____

Assessment

I PLANNING AND PREPARATION OF CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT

____ A. Provide appropriate materials characterized by richness and variety, attractively arranged and accessible to children, in a planned environment that allows for social interaction of children, for individual differences in learning, for continuity of the learning and for a variety of interactions (teacher with individual child, with whole class and with the corridor community).

____ B. Organizes space into dynamic and flexible areas, providing for active and quiet activities, for privacy, for self-directed or self-initiated or appropriate teacher-directed activities.

____ C. Uses regular observation as well as interpretation of informal reading inventories and other diagnostic information to plan, assess, and re-plan for specific individual children.

____ D. Based on observation and diagnostic materials, the teacher develops plans for support of pupil growth that extends over a block of time, subject to reassessment at regular intervals.

____ E. Involves other adults in the classroom (e.g., paraprofessionals) in ongoing planning.

____ F. Appropriately uses special school resources and/or services to help with learning problems.

II TEACHER INTERVENTION IN CHILD'S LEARNING EXPERIENCE

____ A. Based on these specific plans, and interweaving the child's interests, teacher enters into dialogue and interacts

with the child over the planned blocks of reinforcement activites in all curriculum areas.

____ B. Shows respect for each child as a learner--for his interests, feelings, ideas, and individual style of learning.

____ C. Accepts differences in the child's pace and allows time to be used flexibly according to individual needs.

____ D. Shows evidence of using specific and systematic plan for each individual child, for teaching of reading, based on diagnostic material and observation.

III OUTCOMES

____ A. Evidence that teacher's planning for intervention supports the continuity of the child's learning experience, his sustainment of concentration, and his progression to new levels of understanding.

____ B. Evidence of pupil growth in knowledge and skills shown in pupil logs, folders, etc.

____ C. Evidence of contribution by paraprofessionals, student teachers, or volunteers.

____ D. Pupil progress records (including specific, dated, individual reading records) maintained for teacher, teacher/child, teacher/parent review providing for follow-up, reassessment and replanning.

IV CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

____ A. Classroom scheduling and arrangement provides for and encourages appropriate movement and conversation by pupils as needed for responsible, self-initiated, self-directed learning.

____ B. Appropriate procedures and adequate time used for classroom inventory, maintenance and daily clean-up by children.

____ C. Respect for each child's work demonstrated by attention to mounting surfaces, careful lettering of appropriate labels or signs, and by preparation of display tables or shelves for pupil projects.

____ D. Respect for each others efforts encouraged in pupils by maintaining space and time for ongoing projects, by group *sharing* meetings, and by judicious selection of display areas.

____ E. Attention given to care and storage of each child's personal belongings (coats, boots, lunches, notebooks, etc.).

____ F. Appropriate routines established for responsible participation in the corridor activities, e.g., visiting other classrooms, working in the halls, firedrills, using special equipment, etc.

V. PROFESSIONAL GROWTH

____ A. Evidence of teacher's growth in knowledge of content and curriculum areas for the purpose of better extension and enrichment of pupil interests.

____ B. Evidence of cooperation with other teachers and with parents in order to extend the environment for learning within the school.

VI. COMMENTS

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

The study group that drafted the guide for reading assessment consisted of Karen Marschke, Fran Motola, Deborah Meier and Catherine Moloney of the City College Advisory Service to Open Corridors and Martha Norris of the Workshop Center. The teacher's diagnostic instrument was designed by Elli Ohringer and Agnes Violenus of the Advisory Service.

Visiting Committee Report: Vine School

Approved April 1, 1970
by Board of Trustees

THE CINCINNATI SCHOOL FOUNDATION

A citizens research organization working for the continued improvement of schools in the Cincinnati area.

35 East 7th Street
Room 601
Cincinnati, Ohio 45202

VISITING COMMITTEE REPORT: VINE SCHOOL

April, 1970

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THE CINCINNATI SCHOOL FOUNDATION

VISITING COMMITTEE REPORT: VINE SCHOOL

April, 1970

I. INTRODUCTION

The Cincinnati School Foundation initiates studies of the Cincinnati Schools in an effort to provide impartial reports. The citizen's viewpoint can be an important ingredient in the professional decisions for our schools.

In the past several years three high school visiting committee reports were issued and two more are now being completed. A recurring concern among those visiting committee members has been that the preparation children received in the elementary schools has had an effect on their success in the high schools.

The School Foundation selected Vine School for the first elementary visiting program because it permits a contrast of traditional and experimental instructional programs, because it serves a neighborhood about which little is known by citizens in other parts of the city and because it is an integrated school which is racially balanced.

Although high school visiting committees were composed of residents of the respective high school district, the members of the Vine Visiting Committee live in various areas of the city. They include current and former PTA leaders, educators, tutors, an attorney, a minister, and a teacher's aide.

Members of the Vine School Visiting Committee were:

Mrs. Ralph Davidow, Chairman
Mrs. Malvena Brown
Mrs. Alphonse Carter
Mrs. Robert J. Fopma
Mrs. Joe Foster
Lee Hereth
The Rev. Duane Holm
Mrs. Leo Norman, Vice Chairman
Mrs. Joseph Rauh
Mrs. Edwin Roof
Mrs. William R. Schumacher
Mrs. Charles Stix, Secretary

Elementary schools which children of visitors currently attend or with which they have some degree of familiarity are: Bond Hill, Child Guidance Home, Clifton, Condon, Kennedy, Kilgour, Madisonville, Mount Airy, North Avondale, Roselawn, Sacred Heart, Saint Agnes, Vine, Washburn, Westwood Elementary, Westwood Primary.

The report was compiled as the result of observations, discussions with staff members, committee meetings and questionnaires.

A total of 112 hours was spent in visiting classes, lunchroom, playground and talking with school staff members.

Every grade was observed by at least one visitor who currently had a child of his own in the same grade in another school, as a basis for comparison. Each grade was visited by at least three persons. The largest number of visits took place within the last two weeks of November and the first week of December, 1969. There were some visits in January and one in February.

Two orientation sessions were held. One was held with Mrs. Georgia Wright, Principal of Vine School. One was held with Anna Marie Evans, Associate Director of Instructional Services for the Cincinnati Public Schools.

After observations were completed, three meetings were held to report reactions to the school visitations. Following early drafts of the report, four meetings were held to discuss and finalize the report.

Three different questionnaires were prepared by the Visiting Committee with the guidance of a market research analyst from Procter and Gamble. One was answered by all present 4th, 5th and 6th graders during a home room period. Parent questionnaires were sent home with the youngest child in each family in the school and returned in sealed envelopes. Teacher questionnaires were distributed, then mailed in stamped envelopes to the Foundation office. All questionnaires were unsigned.

We recognized some of our limitations. We could never see everything nor interpret all that we saw correctly, inasmuch as we saw only segments of a continuing process.

We felt our influence as visitors was minimal as the children seemed accustomed to having unknown adults around. The teachers knew within which week we would visit; however, we made some unscheduled visits and our observations then were no different. We saw enough of a negative nature to conclude it was impossible to be on good behavior at all times. Nevertheless, we were not invisible.

Some committee members felt that we visited during a particularly exciting time of year. In spite of this we felt our general impressions were not influenced by the timing.

There was enough difference of viewpoint within the committee itself to say that the point of view of educators and ordinary citizens is not the same. It is in the role of concerned citizens, informed but for the most part outside of the field of education, that we submit this report.

II. STATISTICS

There are 640 children in the school and 24 teachers. There are two pre-school classes, one all-day kindergarten, two half-day kindergartens, 4 first grades, 3 second grades, 3 third grades, 3 fourth grades, 2 fifth grades, 3 sixth grades, one primary slow learning class and one intermediate slow learning class.

The latter two classes contain children with IQ's of 50-75. They have 18 and 20 children respectively. Some children in regular classes are on the waiting list for these classes. Classes were not oversized, except for the fifth grades which contained 34 children each.

Grades 1 through 3 are divided into homogeneous groupings for each grade, plus the Project* group. Grades 4 and 6 each had one top group and two groups of lesser ability. Grade 5 had a top and a second group. Within each class there are usually three sub-groupings according to ability.

*Federally funded project under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. (see page 16).

III. BUILDING AND ROOMS

The school is most attractive and inviting. It is located at 2130 Vine Street near the intersection of Clifton and McMicken Avenues. The main part was built in 1960 with an addition completed in 1967. Primary and intermediate classes are housed in separate wings. There is a combination lunchroom-auditorium, a large gym and a resource center.

The school is built into the hillside. There is access on several levels. There are five distinct playground areas which should cut down on fighting among the children but apparently doesn't. Teacher aides supervise the playgrounds during noon periods, from 12:15 p.m. to 12:40 p.m.

The front hall display case was always filled with interesting displays. One held pictures of Negroes who had achieved success and recognition.

The gym is very well equipped. Because of this it is used to hold inter-school athletic events. It seems to be a source of pride in the school.

The resource center is a large, attractive, bright room with drapes on the windows and art prints displayed on the top of the bookcases. The children call it the library and that is its primary function although it houses many other resource tools as well. There are many growing plants which add to its attractiveness. The visiting committee, as well as the teachers, were enthusiastic about the library and its constant use.

The classrooms are large, well lighted and attractive. The shades were drawn more often than not. This was possibly due to either sunlight, outside distractions or, in some cases, broken panes.

It is difficult to evaluate room decorations without knowing if they had meaning for the children. It was hard to tell how much of a hand they had in the displays or if they felt pride in keeping it clean. Much of the decoration was done by the teachers at a great investment of their after-hours time. Work of the children was displayed on the walls of many rooms.

In two classrooms and the tutoring room there were pictures of black as well as white children. Pictures in all other rooms were of white middle class children. The teachers who displayed integrated or black pictures had used ingenuity in finding them. Pictures that reflect the whole of American society should be provided by the school administration to schools throughout the system regardless of the particular school's racial composition.

There are some physical problems with the building. Some of the floors and the slanting ramps are very slippery. There are doors at the end of these ramps. They are certainly not well suited to crowds of children in a school building.

Boys and girls restrooms are located around the corner from each other. The entrances are located so that a teacher cannot supervise both boys and girls from any one vantage point.

The combination of lunchroom and auditorium may have been necessary, but it is hardly ideal since chairs and tables must be set up daily.

The building is overheated at times. The custodian is aware of this problem, but has found no way to maintain even heat throughout the building.

SOME WRITTEN RESPONSES OF 4TH, 5TH AND 6TH GRADERS

QUESTION: Do you have any complaints or suggestions about the playground?

- ~~No~~ because there is nothing complaints about.
- fights When your best friend get ran over boy a car when he was going after the ball
- we need mast toy and a water fountain
- The playground has rocks glass on the playgrounds.
- It is big a enough for a lot of games on
- They need some basket ball nets.
- Need more room to roam, and more playground equiltment
- BiG ~~cjs~~ knock you down

QUESTION: Do you have any complaints or suggestions about the restrooms?

- they don't smell welll.
- restrooms need to be washed and ~~need~~ aired
- do something about the owder
- It would be helpful to have someone watch the restrooms

IV. ADMINISTRATION AND ATMOSPHERE

The atmosphere at Vine School is calm and pleasant. This is a direct contrast to the neighborhood in which it is located, which is poor, littered and violent.

The school office is enhanced by the warm friendly attitudes of the secretary and principal. We feel that the amazing amount of understanding and patience shown by the principal, Mrs. Georgia Wright, is reflected throughout the staff. We feel that Mrs. Wright is largely responsible for this atmosphere. Her warm and positive attitude toward the teachers, children, and parents guides and reinforces them. There is underlying pessimism in the teachers about many of the children's problems and lack of parental involvement. To maintain a positive feeling of accomplishment must take constant reinforcement.

The staff speaks with courtesy to the children. In turn the children were impressively courteous and friendly to visitors.

Discipline seems firm but relaxed. The lack of rigidity and the relaxed atmosphere greatly impressed the visiting committee. We would endorse it for schools everywhere.

In the office, lunchroom, halls and classrooms, rigid discipline was rarely observed nor did it seem needed. Complete silence was not demanded in the classrooms. The noise was usually below the level of distraction. Although many children waste time, they seem to know how to work responsibly and fairly quietly in groups as well as alone. They know how to accomplish transitions with a minimum of fuss.

This relaxed discipline seems to work well. The teachers use this school-wide technique with great skill and understanding. There is a sudden change in the same children when they are cast into the fifteen minute segment with the Teacher's Aide who does not possess the experience to maintain this atmosphere. The dilemma of one substitute also evoked the comparison.

Violence in the neighborhood and on the playground intrudes into the school atmosphere. We observed many cases of firm but fair handling of the aftermath of fights. We saw understanding but not overly permissive handling of truants, a search for a missing boy, a discussion with a parent of a boy in trouble, and mediation of fights.

We observed this low keyed but positive approach taken by the principal, secretary, at least eight teachers and one custodian. We feel it is no coincidence that an overwhelming number of parent respondents to the questionnaire feel welcome at the school, and that so many children seem to like school.

QUESTION: What are some things you like most about your school?

- I like the most about my school is learning
- I like most the teachers and principal and sectary
- I like school because you have fun when you at home you are boring
- Jim and since (gym and science)
- ~~The fords~~
- Science Health Gym Maith Reading Writing Act Music Esperments
- The teachers, The people who go to the school, And sometime their lunches
- The Library and the programs, the subjects Many ~~abertunetust~~ (opportunities)
- Vinc is a good school to me
- I like being a guard. I like spelling. I like my friends. And I like to read.
- WE GET to go on trip
- act and Scinenc and music and spelling gym arithmetic

SOME WRITTEN RESPONSES OF 4TH, 5TH AND 6TH GRADERS

QUESTION: What are some things you like most about your school?

- I like teachers in this school and boys and gurl.
- I like all my teacher and the board Work They give me ...
- the lunch is good and I like like gym and other things.
- I like my teachers I like them because they are tayring to help me to learn.
- The way the schools are furnished.
- My school is nice, it's new, the teachers are nice but most of all you learn a lot.
- Work A what look and walter fines and [illegible] Yeas
- I like to do Math! [redacted] and best of all I like to get G.Y.M., art and music.
- The Teachers are nice and some of the kids are nice, and they learn you very much.

V. TEACHERS

The attitude of teachers, whether positive and helpful or negative and hostile, provides the main ingredient of classroom atmosphere in which students of any school can and will learn.

In this context it appears to visitors that the majority of Vine School teachers, reflecting the atmosphere of the school, relates well to students and handles them with understanding and kind firmness.

Seventeen teachers of 24 returned questionnaires. Of these respondents:

15 are certified teachers, 2 are working toward certification.

2 have taught over 20 years
7 have taught over 10 years
2 have taught over 5 years
6 have taught less than 5 years

1 has taught at Vine School over 25 years
1 has taught at Vine School over 10 years
3 have been at Vine School over 5 years
12 have taught at Vine School less than 5 years . . . 7 of these have been at Vine 1 year or less.

In direct contrast to committee observations, most of the teachers voiced a strong opinion that discipline is too relaxed and permissive and that students misbehave with impunity. They feel that rules of discipline should be enforced more effectively as one aid to the learning process.

We think that this represents a basic difference in philosophy of handling discipline problems and that these conflicting views should be fully discussed within the school.

Teachers estimate that about 6% of the children in regular classes belong in slow learning classes and that about 7% of them are serious behavior problems. Unfortunately it takes a lot of the valuable teaching time to deal with these children.

Some of the teachers spend great amounts of time in class preparation. They find it necessary to adapt the materials to class level. They mimeograph their own instructional programs. Some spend much time working on displays. Others invest time in phoning and meeting with parents. Perhaps the teacher's aides could help with some of the clerical portions of preparation.

Many teachers are concerned with the problems of the children. They are discouraged by what they interpret as apathy on the part of most parents. They are discouraged by lack of interest, discipline and ability on the part of many children, and the problems of adapting texts and curricula to children who read below grade level. Some of them feel a great intrusion in the school by neighborhood, family and racial problems.

Some teachers exert tremendous self discipline in keeping their own feelings out of the classrooms. Unfortunately some take out these frustrations on the children. "Your mother said you were a troublemaker and she's right." "Why are you ALWAYS in trouble?" Or, on questionnaires, "My teacher always tell about what I do." "X has no right to call us animals." It is difficult to respond at all times with patience. However, thoughtless words said in exasperation are often accepted as true evaluation. They are soon forgotten by the teacher but long remembered by the child. Teachers should guard against such remarks.

There are some outstanding teachers who adapt the materials and themselves very successfully to the children. The methods and materials of these teachers should be offered to other teachers who are struggling in similar situations.

Student Teachers

There are many student teachers at Vine School. This second adult in the classroom is invaluable. It cannot be stated strongly enough. It provides the only real possibility for individualized instruction.

With the traditional structure of reading or arithmetic groups there is a great deal of time wasted by children who are supposed to be working independently. The student teacher helps to improve such situations by providing individual supervision and a wary adult eye. Sometimes she does the group work and frees the teacher for skilled individual instruction.

Some teachers use student teachers with a great deal more skill than others.

Teacher Aides

The Released Time Teacher Aide Program is a new tool which the school has not learned to use adequately. It is a result of CTA*-Board of Education negotiation. The teacher's Master Agreement now provides a 15 minute break in the morning and in the afternoon for each teacher.

It brings in community people, but for the most part fails to give them skills or opportunity to make a maximum contribution. Often they sit quietly in a classroom while a teacher conducts class, or they police children for fifteen minutes when the teacher takes her break. Perhaps some way could be found to make this time useful rather than wasted. Perhaps they could be given a training course such as the successful Parent Education Leadership Training.

A second program provides two full-time aides. This seems to be an outstanding success. One woman has been taught skills as a full time kindergarten aide. A second has been taught library book repair and clerical skills. (Lack of funds will eliminate this job.) These two women take justifiable pride in their usefulness.

*Cincinnati Teachers Association

This program could be a bridge to community involvement and understanding. It employs those who need it and upgrades their skills. At the present time the aides do not have much status and are not used as effectively as they should be. Perhaps minimum requirements should be established for this position. Good ideas for this program should be culled system-wide and offered to the administrators and staff of all schools.

Interruptions

There are other interruptions to class time. In most cases the teachers handle them well and they do not seem unduly distracting.

Several teachers feel strongly that there are too many unnecessary events scheduled by the main office. A number of teachers felt that there were too many interruptions by messages from the office. There were also many interruptions caused by disciplinary problems arising from the playground.

The fifteen minute teacher's break is easily the most distracting of all interruptions. Any way to minimize this disruption should be considered. The breaks were scheduled by Vine teachers so that no intermediate class would have more than two such periods daily.

Released Time Church School provides time within the school day, once a week, when children may go to neighborhood churches for religious instruction. The committee is divided in opinion as to the value of this. Some feel this is a valuable experience and the only exposure to religion available to some of the children. Others feel that this is not a school responsibility and should not be scheduled at the expense of class time. The majority felt that it should be re-examined as a policy of the Cincinnati Schools.

VI. NEIGHBORHOOD AND FAMILIES

Vine School is located in a run down, racially mixed neighborhood. Many of the adults distrust one another and fear for their children. Housing is substandard. The streets are littered with debris and broken bottles. There are many abandoned houses with broken windows and rotting wood. Violence is a part of the neighborhood. Some of the children are victims of child neglect.

Families are moving constantly. The rate of transiency in the school is 54%. Families often move short distances into other school districts but sometimes return to Vine School District within the year. The children miss the continuity and stability of having the same teacher, as well as missing out on the special school services. Since this moving within a short radius is not uncommon, we would recommend some arrangement which would permit a child to continue to attend his former school if transportation is not a major deterrent and if class size permits.

Many of the white families come from the Appalachian hills and have strong ties there. They often go back to visit and force their children to miss school.

There are no day care centers for pre-school children in the immediate neighborhood. School age children sometimes are required to stay home from school to baby-sit and deal with other family problems.

Many of the children have very poor eating habits. They are accustomed to sweets, colas and starchy food. The lunch program is designed to teach proper diet, feed the hungry and build healthier bodies.

There are about 231 families who have children in Vine School. Seventy-three of these returned parent questionnaires. It became apparent that some of the children have bright and supportive parents, that some of the parents are confused and upset by the school world; some are hostile to the mixed neighborhood. Some of them would like to improve themselves educationally. It was apparent that none of them are apathetic. All of them are concerned with the school and with the progress of their children.

Many are deeply appreciative of the teachers and the principal. They like best: Principal, teachers, free lunch, pre-school, close to home, all-day kindergarten, Project classes, tutors, school cleanliness. They like least: fighting among the children and intimidation and bullying by the school patrol guards. An overwhelming number mentioned the fighting and expressed fears for their children. Some felt the children should not have to stand outside in the cold waiting for school to open.

Most wanted more homework for the children. One expressed the need to keep them off the streets as well as to challenge bright children with individual research projects. They requested visits from adults who had exciting jobs, more field trips, and news programs. Many requested stronger discipline, especially for habitual troublemakers. There were requests for more men teachers, and for more black teachers.

There was a request for the school to be more of a center for community projects, especially in the summer. Parents were grateful for the existing after school activities.

There were requests for parent education, for helping children to understand others - especially those different from themselves, for typing, for budgeting and cooking, for teaching the parents to read and write better.

One problem is that the teachers feel the parents are apathetic. The parents give this impression in spite of the fact that they say they feel welcome at the school. We hope that the approach taken in the Project will help solve this.

VII. PUPILS

About half the children in Vine School are black, about half are white. There is not much variation from this proportion in the classes which are grouped largely by ability. In this school we feel it worth noting that there is no difference in ability between the races.

In class they seem to mix freely, borrow from each other and help each other without regard to race. Boys are most friendly with boys, girls with girls. When it comes to choosing friends, the racial divisions are apparent.

Visitors feel that many of the children are undersized, thin and pale. Many are poorly dressed. One child wore a pajama top, one had sandals and no socks, one wore long underwear covered by trousers. The school does provide clothing for those who need it. One child was observed being outfitted. However, not all needs are being filled, for reasons unknown to us.

On student questionnaires, 105 out of 189 children noted their concern with fighting or violence. There was no question which mentioned this -- the write-ins were in response to questions about what they disliked. This overwhelming response covered all aspects of fighting – ganging up, extortion, beatings, larger children picking on smaller ones, kicking, throwing rocks. This must have some effect on their peace of mind and attitudes toward learning. We do not know whether they are fearful, but they are aware of and a part of violence outside and they don't like it.

In each grade, the number of references to fighting increased as the class level dropped. Apparently the higher achieving children also cope with the environment better and are less bothered or concerned with fights. Fourth graders, the youngest group questioned, complained most often about having money taken from them by older children. Parents complained about this happening to the younger children.

Those who fought often assumed blame for it. "I get mean." "I had a knife in the lunchroom." They seemed to be seeking direction for coping with their behavior as well as with learning problems.

108 children felt school work was very interesting. 48 thought it was fairly interesting and 26 thought it boring or dull. 151 felt it taught them what they need to know, 14 did not. 117 said they were proud to go to Vine School, 21 said they were not, and 41 were indifferent. 169 said that going to school was important to them. Some said it was a warm place, some liked free lunches. To some it is a haven of order and stability found no place outside of school. Chief among likes and dislikes were particular teachers or courses, but in no strong pattern. On the whole their attitude was very favorable toward teachers and the principal.

Sixth graders expressed the largest number of negative comments concerning interest, pride in school and general attitude.

Some asked for more field trips, some for more movie projectors. Some wanted to learn more about black people. One wanted foreign language taught, one wanted to learn about careers.

Many were distressed with their own lack of accomplishment. A typical reaction was an answer to a question on problems. "Yes, I have trouble with arithmetic. Yes, I had help. No, the problem was not solved. I still can't do arithmetic."

QUESTION: What are some things you don't like about the school?

- some kids are mean, the rest rooms are messy and dirty and stinkey
- how the teacher call us animals
- I don't like to fight anyone I don't like to get beatup after school. I like to be friends with everybody.
- I do not like school in all. SWats
- I wish the children were more considerate about others and would act at least halfway decent to their teachers, subs, Student teachers.
- teachers don't care what we do It only goes to the 6 grade
- Big kids take my food at lunch time And Push us out of the line
- The teacher doesn't gave us a lot of work
- I hate to get up in the morning
- People going down the hall and git's jumpe e

- fight fight, run in hall scream break window

- I beat miss Teacher
fight people pull people tell
story on people.

- I don't like about school is fighting.

- I don't like what [redacted] I don't like it
some time I need it

- big kids take my money

- I would for you to give me
something to do.

-Because when many High [redacted] school get out they come
[redacted] down and fight [redacted] us little [redacted] people

- He gives us three chances and when we three points
we git a swat and that's fair.

- The teacher doesn't listen.

- Too many fights. Too much running
around the halls. I to stop this
fuck like what is a Bave!!

- That people right on the
walls and through trash around

VIII. ELEMENTARY SECONDARY EDUCATION PROJECT (ESEA)

Last year (1968) the Federal Government granted money to Vine School for a three year project. The purpose was to foster reading skills by reducing known deterrents such as physical defects, emotional problems, lack of home involvement and lack of cultural experiences.

120 children in grades K, 1, 2 and 3 were chosen for the project. They were screened by being rated on adjustment, attitudes and home environment. Those who scored in the lowest 60% were chosen.

The Federal Government gives tests to judge the progress of these children. Hopefully their progress will be followed for years.

The changes brought to Vine School as a result of this project are:

A Co-ordinator: This educator (teacher with Master's Degree), together with the principal, wrote the original proposal for the Vine School Project. She has worked with it from its inception and helped develop all the programs of the Project which are listed below. She co-ordinates the program and serves as a visiting teacher-social worker. She visits parents in their homes. She arranges discussions and conferences with them at school. She prepared a booklet for them, "School is the Child's Most Important Business." She feels that the Project parents are showing awareness, concern and involvement as a direct result of the Project, and that higher motivation is evident in the parents and children.

A Parent Aide: She helps the Co-ordinator, goes to homes to check on children's absences and assists in the breakfast snack program. The Co-ordinator feels she and other parent aides contribute immensely to the school and community by their intimate knowledge of the community and the family networks within it.

A Project Nurse: She is assigned to the school full time. In 1968-1969 she served only Project children. This year she is "Health Counselor," serves all pupils under state, not federal, funds. She discovered three children with brain concussions in the month of November. The checkups, dental exams, immunizations and referrals which lie within her duty could not be done by a Public Health Nurse on weekly rounds. She refers children to clinics or General Hospital, and will follow-up to try to convince parents to schedule the medical attention. She developed the Vine Project Health Chart, which suggests prevention, care and cure for many of the illnesses and injuries prevalent in the community.

Breakfast Snacks and/or Free Lunch: These are provided for Project children.

Field Trips: In the interest of widening horizons, field trips are scheduled for Project classes. Last year each class took three trips.

An All Day Kindergarten: The all day kindergarten was most impressive to visitors. Priority had been given to children who had been in Head Start pre-school classes. The children are eager, bright, and very responsive. The all-day program is not too long for them. They thrive on it. The teacher is very enthusiastic about their capabilities and skill with reading readiness. The teacher has a skilled full-time aide.

Project Classes in Grades 1, 2 and 3: Visitors were well impressed with the Project Classes. Attitudes of high motivation and accomplishment are evident. These teachers seem to think they have more flexibility to adapt to the needs of the children.

Perfect attendance is one of the goals of the Project. (The stress on attendance in the Project has spread to a stress on attendance throughout the school, and many incentives are given such as daily questioning of absence, rewards for attendance, etc.). In the Project, the Parent-Aide calls or visits the home the first day a child is absent to discover the reason. If it is not illness, a member of the staff tries to remedy the situation.

AVERAGE DAILY ABSENCE FOR THE FIRST TWO MONTHS OF CURRENT SCHOOL YEAR

GRADE I

Period ending 10/3/69

	Boys	Girls	Total
Project Class	0	0	0
Regular Class A	2	2	4
Regular Class B	1	2	3
Regular Class C	1	0	1

Period ending 10/31/69

Project Class	1	1	2
Regular Class A	2	2	4
Regular Class B	2	1	3
Regular Class C	1	2	3

IX. OTHER SCHOOL SERVICES

A visiting teacher is shared with Rothenberg School to investigate absence and family problems among children not involved in the Project.

The school refers children to the dental clinic at Rothenberg School. It also refers children to clinics and to General Hospital when necessary. The school is not completely successful in convincing parents to take advantage of these medical services.

A school psychologist comes to the school 3½ days every four weeks. His function is mainly diagnosis by testing.

A speech therapist is available two half-days a week.

A Public Health Nurse is scheduled two half-days each week, but sometimes her other scheduled duties interfere with her school visits.

Teacher Librarian - The use of a library teacher is an innovation about which the classroom teachers are very enthusiastic.

The **School Resource Officer** is a city policeman assigned to Vine and several other city schools. A committee member observed his discussion with 6th grade Health classes of the dangers of using drugs. Their parents were invited to attend. This use of city policemen as community protectors and friends is highly commended. It presents the police force in a positive way, shows concern by the city and possibly provides some students with a job opportunity model.

There are two kinds of **tutorial programs** at the school. One is Volunteers In Public Schools (VIPS) which consists of women volunteers from various organizations who tutor second and third grade children. The second is an after school program funded by the state. Sixth, seventh and eighth graders tutor the children. They are supervised by a teacher. Some after school tutors also come from the University of Cincinnati.

The **P.T.A.** holds monthly discussion groups. This year the meetings have been devoted to ways parents can help their children. They have been poorly attended.

The **free lunch programs** at Vine School are many and entail a large amount of paperwork. There are six groups of children:

Welfare children who have an individual card to be checked each day.
Children whose lunches are provided by state funds.
Children who need only milk.
Project children who get snacks and the all-day kindergarten whose lunches are paid for by the Federal Government.
A small group who pay for their lunch.
A small group who go home for lunch.

Many forms must be filled out daily. Endless time is used for this by teachers, principal, secretary and cooks.

However, the appreciation for the free lunch programs for the children was noted on many parent questionnaires, often in very moving terms. Hunger is more than a word in this community. Continuation of free lunches for school children is absolutely necessary from a learning and a humanitarian standpoint.

STATISTICS TAKEN FROM STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRES

USE OF SERVICES BY 4th, 5th and 6th GRADERS - Sept., 1969 to Feb. 1, 1970

(None of these children are involved in the Project)

School Nurse - 107

Psychologist - 16

Visiting Teacher - 34

Doctor arranged by School - 36

Public Health Nurse - 41

Dental Clinic - 59

Tutors - 36

QUESTION: Have you any ideas on how your teacher could make your class more interesting? Suggestions for things you would like to learn?

by ~~tell~~ tell how interesting it is and by ~~to~~ putting more actions in it and maybe ~~y~~ they will want to ~~try~~ it.

~~cooking sewing~~ and other things they need to like ~~important~~

Take us on more trips to learn more ~~Bla~~ knowledge.

Talk a little less or cut work short

We should learn more about Black people.

I would like to learn about cars

~~she can pay attion to me~~ like we pay attion to her.

~~I would like to know about long time ago E- How to write your own book E- is it hard to be a teacher yourself~~

I don't not no -Our subjects are just boring.

~~repeart~~ the bad from good
(separate)

Art, Gym and Music

These programs were often cited by the children as their favorites. They seem to provide the freedom in which teachers can adapt creative programs to the children.

The emphasis on art seems to be on individual expression and the creation of beauty by the use of many media. (This is in contrast to art as visitors remember it, where only those who could draw well were encouraged.) This seems to be a great step forward in discovering and encouraging creativity in children.

The gym program is impressive. There is no rigid regulation of uniform dress. However, the children have to make some effort or they cannot participate. They have to have either gym shoes, shorts or slacks. Many played in bare feet. Exercises and game playing were combined. Squad leaders and squads were used for organization. This worked well. There was some problem of tempers flaring after games when the children had gone to the locker room or even later on the playground. The teacher handled these situations in a constructive way.

The music classes observed were preparing for the Christmas programs. As in art and gym, the music seemed to be a welcome change of pace from the academic program.

Health

An observed lesson on blood vessels held no interest for the class. Few opened their books or copied the board work. Although some functional health is taught, the program should include much more. Air and water pollution, rat control, smoking, drugs or a health booklet written for Project parents might involve and interest children in current health problems which face them.

Math and Science

Children seemed interested in math and science classes. The math and science programs were adapted by the teachers to the reading and ability levels of the children. The teachers are satisfied with these programs although the books are often too difficult.

The science classes we observed were studying topics directly related to the children. In one class they were working on group projects concerning weather. In another they were told where to search for fossils in their neighborhood. The subject matter in both classes was very interesting to the children.

Reading and Spelling

A majority of the children in Vine School is reading below grade level. According to teacher estimates, about 16% read on or above grade level, 44% read one year below grade level, 28% read two years below and 12% read three or more years below grade level. The disparity between grade level and reading level often increases as the children grow older.

The seriousness of this problem is emphasized when we consider that all textbooks are written at standard grade level. A child's academic success depends upon his ability to read on his grade level. For those children who read just one year below grade level, math, science and social studies books become too difficult.

Some teachers were deeply concerned with the lack of reading skills of the children, with their inadequate vocabularies and with their difficulty in understanding what they read.

- field trips go on hikes

- I don't thing is the teacher I say is the peolpe in the room.

- yes talk to us right

- I think I should learn my manners before school is out.

- How to get in good shape.

- History and more about math and more about spelling and more about bone

- Joy be good good to the class for one time

- My room in school is fine, but it's the children that disturbe me.

- Yes Bring more movies on what we are study

- To find a ways to look up information without asking the librarian

- We should learn about sex, And about our enviroment

It seems to us that the children are continually exposed to only one method of teaching reading. When the adopted methods fail, teachers usually use books and aids which try the same methods again and again with minor variations. Too often a child seemed to have no interest in his reading group except when it was his turn to read. Some pupils have little understanding of the workbooks or the directions in them. Teachers have to constantly explain the meaning of the workbooks.

The children's inability to spell was evident on student questionnaries. Although the word choices were the children's own, most answers contained misspelled words. Some words frequently misspelled (Grades 4, 5 and 6) were: room, little, water, kids, mop, sweep, take, black, white, more, you, there, need, fix, glass, some, school and teacher. Some words were spelled phonetically, some were beyond interpretation.

On questionnaires some sixth graders were completely unable to express their thoughts coherently. We are concerned with what will happen to them next year. A child may fail twice in elementary school and then is passed on to Junior High. The curriculum for these children in Junior High should be geared entirely to the fact that they cannot read or write well. We surely fail them doubly in asking them to take courses for which they have no skills, and in forcing them to remain in a school which seems unable to teach them to communicate in written language.

The only set of questionnaires in which every single one was legible and clearly understandable was that of the Slow Learning II class. With these children some degree of success in communicating has been achieved. If this has been achieved by major concentration on reading skills, with all other material subordinated to that goal, shouldn't this approach be adopted with all other children who fail to learn to read and write?

In discussing the difficulty of teaching some children to read, visitors agreed that the problem is not restricted to schools with underprivileged children. It affects significant numbers of children of all backgrounds as observed in other schools of which the visitors have knowledge.

The methods, materials, in-service teacher training, and the amount of time allotted for reading should be given immediate attention and action by all who are responsible for the instruction of children.

QUESTION: Have you had any problems this year with schoolwork or conduct?

- I do not understand because whe I read it do not make any sence.

I'an always [redacted].

Sometimes I don't understand my books but usually I do when I don't someone helps me.

- I have been doing my best in work I just don't now why

- I play alot and Don't always have my work but I an catching up and flying good

- I get sleepy.

- I just cant get the stuff he cant explain it wright to me

- when we have a signment I some time don't understand what we are suppose to do

- I don't hardly do my scoolwork.

fighting but I try to be good

XI. TEACHING MATERIALS

The teaching materials in a school include the textbooks and all the teaching aids.

Children are required to pay 75¢ paper money at the beginning of the school year. If this is not paid their report cards are withheld to encourage payment. As of March 1, the Vine School paper money collection was still in the red by $171.73. As a result there is a shortage of paper and many report cards have been withheld. This punishes a child for something beyond his control.

A shortage of pencils is sometimes a problem. Children cannot work without them. Since this is a basic tool each class should have an adequate supply.

Movies are often used as a teaching tool but the projectors are not in good condition nor are there enough of them. Two of the school projectors, each ten years old, have been at the Visual Aid Exchange since December awaiting repairs.

A televised program in a first grade classroom followed a script which asked children to look for the purple veins in their wrists. Black children could not find the veins and reacted with puzzlement and worry. The teacher in the classroom repeated the directions without noticing their dilemma. Teaching materials should be screened for their applicability to all children.

In theory, city wide adoption of textbooks has merit. Since children move often they can change schools and continue to use the same books. However, in practice, standard texts put a heavy burden on teachers who have to overcome the disparity between book and ability. This provides haphazard material depending on the differing talents and time commitments of the teachers. In addition, difficult books probably make children feel that they can read only with the aid of an interpreter.

The textbooks are written on standard grade level. A majority of the children at Vine School read below grade level. The teachers are concerned with the difficulty of the language in which the textbooks are written. They also feel there is often too rapid acceleration from one unit to the next. While they praise some individual books, they consider many too difficult, many uninteresting to children, some outdated and most of them unrelated to today's children living in the city.

Visitors agree with teachers that the spelling books are an ineffective series. The words listed are easy enough for the poor readers but these children do not seem to transfer any knowledge of the words to their written work. For good readers the words are far too easy. Directions and exercises in the books are needlessly complex.

The health book series offers few experiments. The series does not seem to interest the children.

There was adverse reaction among some members of the visiting committee to the fourth grade social studies book, Our Big World. The text presents facts on geography, climate, products, resources, descriptions of the life of children, folk costumes and customs. The emphasis on facts, so quickly forgotten, seems to be a throwback to curricula of an earlier generation. There was little evidence of provocative questions for the children to think about. The text posed no problems related to either the people or government of the country being studied.

We suggest that social studies should stimulate the children to think creatively, to discuss ideas, to broaden their viewpoint about other peoples, to consider the people of other countries as a "now generation" rather than the stereotypes of the past.

The fifth grade program considers America. It seems overly concerned with capitals, products and statistics. Because the textbook was too difficult for the children, the teacher read it aloud. The lesson concerned the House of Representatives, the number of members, powers, etc. It was presented as an accumulation of facts and statistics with no understanding of an individual's relation to his government. Surely there are materials and ways to make government and economics vital to the children's lives. Cannot courses be structured to take advantage of the current examples of action by governmental bodies?

The use of poetry in reading books and in the Thanksgiving program seems to give much enjoyment to the children. They memorized poems although it had not been asked of them.

In some of the primary rooms there is a good selection of educational games for those who finish their work early.

The library houses many teaching aids and materials in addition to a large collection of books. Some staff members said that many fine materials remain unused because they are written at too difficult a level for the children at this school.

XII. DISCIPLINE

In most inner city schools and certainly at Vine, discipline demands a higher percentage of time than one administrator has to give. Many days are devoted entirely to handling discipline problems and meeting with law enforcement agencies. One concern which administrators must deal with is the use of corporal punishment as a disciplinary measure.

We recognize the problem of the differing expectations which people have about how schools should administer discipline.

For hopeful parents who see education as the tool by which their children can rise above their environment, relaxed discipline might seem to be a luxury. They feel the need of rigid discipline to establish order amid the chaos of the neighborhood and to provide quiet in the classrooms so that children have an opportunity to learn. (Perhaps they also place confidence in the memorization of a body of facts which to them is evidence that their children are being taught and are performing well.)

Many teachers would find rigid discipline easier to administer. We feel that the use of punishment and scolding and an emphasis on straight lines and silence does not have a desirable effect on the minds of children, although it might look orderly and reassuring to adults. We do not suggest either rigid discipline or disorganized freedom but a plan of discipline reached with understanding by all concerned.

Our ideas follow the reasoning that a basic discipline should be firmly established, but that creativity of thought and interest should not be stifled by too many rules.

XIII. CONCLUSIONS

We found many strengths within Vine Elementary School. There are many positive ways in which the school attempts to build good attitudes, eager, alert minds and physically healthy children. Some of the programs and curricula seem to succeed well with them. The staff works to prepare special material to provide for the needs of the children. The class sizes are generally reasonable. The physical plant is attractive. Some specific comments of the committee are:

- -- The pleasant atmosphere and lack of rigidity within the school is highly commended.
- — Many classrooms have a second adult assisting the teacher. This seems most desirable and with slower learners, almost necessary.
- — The free lunch program at Vine School is to be commended. Since so many children are on one program or another, couldn't all be fed to eliminate the record keeping?
- — The Health and Social Services available in the school and in the Project are helpful and highly commendable.
- — The all-day kindergarten is excellent. Together with the pre-school programs it seems to make an impact on alleviating early deprivation problems.
- — The involvement of the Project in actively seeking parental participation is commended.
- — Truants and tardy children are handled with understanding rather than routine punishment. We commend this approach.
- — An emphasis on field trips and outside visitors seems to be encouraged at Vine School and seems a good method of broadening horizons. More field trips were requested by children.
- — The attention to and stress on attendance is commended.

As a racially balanced school it provides a chance for black and white children to work and play together at an early age and to understand each other by sharing common experiences. In class and on school grounds they mix freely.

However, we think the school staff could take more advantage of the different cultural backgrounds among the children. The differences could be explained and the children encouraged to talk about them. This might promote pride in self and understanding of others. It could be a more promising way of dealing with differences than trying to minimize them.

The basic problem is that we are still unwilling to pay for educating children well. Considering the financial limitations which restrict the Cincinnati Schools, we believe that Vine School is doing a good job --- better than we might expect. However, some of the special programs which we praise so highly would not be available were it not for federal funds. When the programs can no longer be financed by federal funds, we hope that the Board of Education will be able to finance their continuance at Vine School and their adoption at other schools.

We observed two basic areas for improvement at Vine School. We think they reflect on the school system rather than on this school alone.

1. **The first is the teaching of reading.** Certainly the background of some children is a deterrent, but we do not accept the idea that a majority of children in any school is unable to master reading. We feel it points to a failure of the administration and teachers to motivate their pupils and find methods to suit the needs of the children.

   Some teachers have greater success than others in teaching children to read. This may be due to the skill and effort of the individual teacher. It may be due to a skillful adaptation of a method to the peculiar problems of certain children. We should urge all teachers to try various methods of teaching reading until they find one with which they can succeed. The administrators and supervisors have a responsibility to offer alternate methods and to train teachers for their use.

   Some means of communication should be established through which a teacher can share a successful method with other teachers and administrators throughout the city.

2. **The second area is curriculum and method of teaching.**

   (a) Curriculum seems to have been put together piece by piece rather than organized as a whole. There are so many inclusions in the curriculum which seem to have been grafted onto a core program over the years. These result in giving the children a shallow offering of information on a multitude of subjects, but no foundation on which to build skills or methods of thinking and inquiry.

   (b) Curriculum tends to be memorization of content rather than learning how to learn. Much of the classroom participation which we observed seemed to require memory or automatic responses rather than thought. Certainly there are basic facts which must be memorized. However, facts alone are not enough in this generation. We would rather hope to instill within each child a set of tools with which he can pursue knowledge and skills independently. Such an approach might help a child to build a better self image.

> Perhaps practical knowledge of how to cope with the world they know (from health, economic, social and family viewpoints) might spur them to more excitement about knowledge and some intellectual curiosity. It might also provide enough relevant material to eliminate some of the behavior problems which stem from boredom. Perhaps the curriculum could be geared to provide mental exercise, with projects that answer questions such as: Does it help a child think logically? Does it stir his imagination, creativity and intellect? Does it help him cope with views which oppose his own and to modify his views in the light of these? Does it help him understand and accept authority and responsibility? Will it help him understand how our nation functions and the avenues within our political system through which he can work to effect changes? Does it teach him how to find facts he needs?

Since many problems in the high schools have their roots in the elementary schools, we consider it urgent that educators and laymen make an all-out effort to correct the deficiencies in our elementary schools.

XIV. COMMITTEE SUGGESTIONS

On School Problems

1. Every facet of this school community should be drawn into the problems of fighting and violence. Each room, each group (Gray-Y, Guards, Scouts, Stunt Team, etc.) staff, parents, PTA, Project parents, teen alumni, black and white community leaders should be contacted. This could be a unifying issue inasmuch as it is an inter-racial concern and common ground. Constructive plans for controlling violence and achieving some mutual understanding might result. The school should seek the involvement of outside community agencies.

2. The concerns over lack of discipline should be dealt with.

   a. School staff meetings should consider it.

   b. Staff and parents should meet to discuss mutually supportive plans to improve discipline.

   c. A city-wide teachers' workshop should be held and geared to offering practical help and solutions in behavior and discipline problems.

   d. The specific problems of guards' behavior should be met.

      1) Incentives should be given to guards to encourage responsible behavior. Rewards and recognition might help alleviate bullying and encourage responsibility on the part of the boys and girls who are guards.

      2) Younger children should discuss the problems of the guards and perhaps "role play" the situation of guards faced with balky children.

   e. There should be some provision to withdraw seriously disruptive children from regular classrooms.

3. Efforts to bring awareness of black culture, problems and contribution vary according to the efforts of each principal and each teacher.

   a. Since schools offer the only real hope of building awareness of all American problems, more emphasis on black culture is needed in all schools. This includes more visual aids, discussion of problems, films, books and perhaps inter-school exchange of visits and ideas when needed.

   b. The effect on black children of current curricula and methods should be studied and, when damaging, altered.

4. Children who move short distances but into another school district should be permitted to remain in their former school whenever possible.

5. Inner city schools receive the same amount of money per child as more affluent schools. The school system should provide more funds for supplies since inner city families are not able to provide the same amount of supplementary supplies as other families.

6. The teacher aide program needs to be vastly improved.

   a. It should consider better use of the aide's time.

   b. There should be a training program to teach aides useful skills.

   c. Teachers need to be educated to the possible effective uses of aides.

   d. The disruptiveness of the teacher's break should be considered. Any possible ways to alleviate it should be used.

      One suggestion is to let intermediate children also take a break during the language arts half-day. Three hours is a long time for them to be attentive and sit still.

7. We should urge the city to use school buildings as community centers. Community resources and classes for adults could be made available. More summer programs for children and after school and evening programs for adults might be possible.

On Curriculum

1. There should be more slow learning classes.

2. A four year primary program should be considered for those children who are behind after the first three grades. The fourth year could provide concentration on reading and writing skills to better prepare children for the upper grade program.

3. Standard classes might well benefit from some techniques of special classes.

   a. In slow learning and Project classes there seems to be more flexibility and less reliance on textbooks.

   b. In these classes there is also a greater concentration on reading skills with fewer diversions.

4. Teachers should provide a variety of methods for teaching reading. Blaming failures on background of children is self-defeating. If teachers are not taught a variety of methods in Teachers Colleges they should be given in-service training. They should have materials and alternate programs available to them.

5. All teachers in inner city schools need remedial reading skills. Intermediate teachers, in particular, are lacking in the skills needed to teach reading on a primary level. They need to be taught such skills and be given time during the school day to use them.

6. There should be better training of tutors in techniques which are effective in the teaching of remedial reading so that the efforts and time which they donate make a greater impact.

7. Place less stress on covering certain units by certain times. Some teachers feel that it is they who must cover the material, not the children. Instead of having a few minutes, change the daily program to correlate several subjects, using large blocks of time.

8. Consideration should be given to the value of many interruptions in the school day. This includes programs, Released Time Church School and countless errands and messages during classtime.

9. Most academic courses seem to offer basically the same material visitors remember from their school days.

    a. The social studies programs should be geared to active citizenship (working back to historical precedents from current issues), Fair Trade Laws (back to legal processes from faulty TV sets), economics (how to spend our money), foreign countries which are important or nearby. Courses could still be well structured as there are timely issues along every historic and economic path.

    b. The spelling program should be revised.

    c. The health curriculum should be revised.

10. In the top groups it must be a problem for the intelligent child to remain interested.

    a. Teachers should have ideas for special projects. These might be included with their course materials to provide in depth research study for bright children.

    b. Perhaps bright children could be placed in non-graded or special classes in cooperation with neighboring elementary schools (such as is being done at Burton School). This could provide enough children to fill classes which could move at a more rapid pace.

On Teaching Materials

A. Working tools of the children:

    1. Provide ample supplies of paper without charge, or at least without penalty, to all schools.

    2. Provide an ample supply of pencils to supplement the children's supply of them.

B. Teachers supplies, materials and equipment:

1. Some teachers overcome the inadequacies of the books by mimeographing their own material. They should be encouraged to submit their adaptations which could be made available to teachers throughout the system.

2. *Provide enough projectors in good repair.

3. *Tape recorders, record players and television sets should be more readily available to the teachers.

4. *Provide a globe of the world on request of teachers.

5. *Keep master copies of material for the duplicator.

6. *Provide more math aids for teachers whose classes cannot read well.

7. *Provide more visual aids which include black children and families.

C. Particular needs in Subject Areas:

1. *Provide some text books which are written as a continuous story for children to read through at their own pace rather than using the conventional unit-by-unit method.

2. *Place Ginn language kits and more reading readiness aids in kindergarten rooms for those children who are ready for them.

3. Relate the health materials to modern health problems.

4. *Find better materials to teach spelling or else integrate it into other subjects.

5. Review the social studies materials for intermediate grades relating what is taught to people and ideas, correlating facts and statistics with these.

D. Teaching Technique and Materials:

1. *Gear the materials in academic areas to the frame of reference of the children.

2. Perhaps instead of investing in standard social studies texts for each pupil in a class, a few copies of several different sets could be purchased.

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*Specific suggestions made by members of the faculty at Vine School.
Unmarked suggestions made by visiting committee.

The demands of bureaucracy

Daniel Guttman

The article that follows is about a process of evaluation, if that is what it can be called, that we have alluded to in this position paper but not really discussed. This kind of evaluation is more concerned with technical questions, such as "how do we make schools work?", than with human questions, such as "how do we better support the growth of our children"? Obviously the critique that this publication embodies stands against this kind of evaluation. The fact is, however, it is the latter that still dominates activity in this field. Why this is the case needs to be understood, it needs to be seen. The reasons have almost nothing to do with what is known about the process of education. They have almost everything to do with the demands of bureaucracy. In the semi-annual hassle over test scores and at other times, an appreciation of this important distinction tends to disappear. So it is worth recalling exactly what this system of evaluation is all about, even if the description is a limited one, that is, even if the critique doesn't so much question the basic assumptions of the process but simply questions--as the following article does--the way the process is implemented. In a sense, the meaning (or mindlessness) of what is described lies at the heart of the difficulty in sustaining and disseminating new ideas and practices that do have bearing on children's development.

The material has been taken from a forthcoming book on Think Tanks being prepared by the Center for the Study of Responsive Law, Washington, D. C.

I

Important pieces of Great Society legislation required the "evaluation" of monies spent on public programs. "Evaluation" may mean many things; certainly the social legislation of the 1960s embodied a great variety of purposes. But the legislation generally did no more than require that something called "evaluation" be performed. The laws left the Executive Branch and its experts free to establish technical standards for evaluations. So the term was applied to everything from the anecdotal observation made by consultants, to lists of any and all data that could be found for computerization, and clever bureaucrats, with their hired experts, quickly conceived of dozens of possible objectives by which a given program was to be judged. Congress neither commented on the organizational structure of the evaluation process, nor considered the way in which the results of evaluation were to be used.

In this way, evaluation rapidly developed a reputation for being the easiest mark among high-priced studies. "Evaluation," asserted Gerson Green, who directed the R & D division of OEO's controversial Community Action Program, "is a whore." As a rule of thumb, Green and other seasoned bureaucrats could assume that evaluations were generally rigged at their inception, and the results were likely to be quite selectively used.

II

This process of evaluation has relied heavily on contractors who often possess little or no substantive knowledge of the subject matter under evaluation. Contracts are continually awarded to a wide variety of groups. They have gone to university social scientists, to black consulting firms, to big business consulting firms, to defense-oriented research centers, to firms peopled by former poverty program officials, and to groups that represent school officials, cities, vocational rehabilitation administrators--the welfare "trade associations." Use of this motley assemblage of contractors has not produced any coherent body of information. The evaluation system, laments an Urban Institute team, is "being built piecemeal with every contractor doing his own thing on most of the bits and pieces."

The "literature search" is one typical component of many evaluation contracts. Contractors were

paid to bone up on their fields at the start of each contract as if they were freshman students. What is the agency left with at the end of a series of studies by different contractors? Not much, suggests the Urban Institute:

> The program models developed differ from study to study and have little operational meaning to program managers. The data collected are specialized and unique to each study. Differences in definition, sampling, technique, timing, content make it impossible to relate the data of several independent collection efforts.

Ignorance is compounded, because in the long run, which means two or three years in the lifespan of recent social programs, agency evaluation staffs change as dramatically as contractors. New evaluation staffs freely adopt a "not our disaster" attitude towards past studies.

The Office of Education, for example, has had some bureau gifted with the title "evaluation" since at least 1965. In 1967, the then Commissioner of Education, Harold Howe, issued a memo on "evaluation policy." The memo assigned clear responsibility for OE evaluations to an "Office of Planning and Evaluation." The memo made it clear that the responsibility for "coordination of all evaluation activities rested with the office, for otherwise the commissioner has no central point to which he can go for information about the increasingly important matter of evaluation."

In 1970, the OE evaluation office came under reorganization again. The new office scrambled to salvage a record of OE evaluations. They managed to scrape up copies of the reports produced by perhaps a dozen contracts, out of dozens of evaluation contracts that had been awarded after the 1967 memo. While the new office knew there were other contracts, it had no idea whether final reports had been produced for many of them.

John Evans has directed OE's evaluation office since 1970. Evans argues that no real "evaluation" of educational programs took place before the crop of efforts which his office is currently overseeing. According to him, administrators who evaluated programs tended to take one of two courses.

If the administrator chose the first course, he drew up a Request for Proposal (RFP)--the government's invitation to contractors to submit bids intended for a computer software firm. If all went well, the firm eventually produced a system for the collection of information. Lots of information would be collected, albeit with great gaps in the information. No one would know what to make of the information. If the administrator chose the second course, he decided that he wanted to do a "before and after" study, to measure changes in some element of the program over the evaluation contract period. This study would be a "one shot" affair; that is, it would leave no system behind to continue producing information.

The administrator would commission the development of a lengthy RFP, which would take many hours to prepare but would say essentially, "please evaluate this program." Bidders would interpret the RFP in a wide variety of ways, and a series of proposals, with prices ranging from $25,000 to $2,500,000 would soon land on the desk of bureaucrats, who, quips Evans, "don't know a chi square from a load of coal." The contract would be awarded and invariably, depending on the type of organization that receives the award, there would be problems administering the study. Perhaps even the aim of the study would shift dramatically. "At the end of this line," concludes Evans, "and later than anybody had intended, a report would arrive too late to affect anyone's decision; it would be too voluminous, too technical, and it would be shelved.

III

In few areas has the effectiveness of spending been publicly questioned as severely as in compensatory education programs. A wide variety of experts and politicians have argued that there has been minimal relationship between spending and educational effectiveness. The law has mandated more evaluations of compensatory education programs (and more have been performed) than of probably any other Great Society program. Yet the evaluation laws have generally not been complied with, and those evaluations which have been produced have provided only fragmentary evidence of the effectiveness of federal spending. It was out of a sense of the perceived weaknesses of both evaluation and of the Great Society programs that analysts conceived a new bureaucratic research technique that has come to be called "social experimentation." An examination of OE's compensatory education programs, and how they developed, offers a perspective on the evolution from evaluation to "social experimentation."

First of all, the Great Society produced two large chunks of legislation directed at aiding elementary and/or secondary school students from low-income families. Head Start and Follow Through were created by the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 (and amendments), which provided the basic mandate for the Office of Economic Opportunity. Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 provided the largest sum of money for the disadvantaged. One and one half billion dollars were appropriated for the program in 1971.

Now, since its creation as the Bureau of Education in 1967, the Office of Education has had a mandate to gather information about the status of education in America. But until recently, the Office has been a small agency laboring under the assumption that the role of the federal government in education was to be passive and minor. The passage of ESEA turned OE from a dwarf among agencies to a growing adolescent, and since 1965 the agency has continually reorganized itself in search of an identity.

In 1959, the American Institutes for Research (AIR), a private social science research organization, talked OE into sponsoring the collection of information about students then finishing high school that was a major breakthrough in data collection, and a breakthrough also in OE's use of private contractors. AIR remains a major OE contractor. (AIR in fact was commissioned to write the agency's guide to the preparation of evaluations.) The National Achievement Study represented a second breakthrough in the collection of nationwide education data. With financial backing from foundations, social scientists convinced OE and state school officials that the time had come to obtain a common measure of achievement from country-wide samples--a unique psychological concession to the federalization of education.

The passage of ESEA produced a flood of federal requirements for data gathering. As a history of the Act records, the "legislative mandate for formal reports and evaluations of programs was loud and clear." Evaluation reports were required at every administrative level of the program. To receive grants from state education agencies, local educational agencies had to assure the state that "effective procedures, including provision for appropriate objective measurements of educational achievement, will be adoped for evaluating at least annually the effectiveness of the educational programs in meeting the special educational needs of educationally deprived children." The law required local agencies to supply the state with annual evaluation reports. In turn, the states were mandated to supply Washington with evaluations if they wished to receive Title I monies. Finally, amendments to ESEA provided that the Office of Education annually provide Congress with an evaluation of all programs--including Title I.

In his 1970 message on education, President Nixon explained that the "best available evidence indicates that most of the compensatory education programs have not measurably helped poor children catch up."

The President made this statement in the context of a decision not to increase spending for compensatory education. The first step to reform of the educational system, said the President, was more "research and experimentation." The President's assessment of the "evidence" has been shared by many who disagree with his assessment of the "reforms" implied by the evidence. A Harvard team headed by Christopher Jencks, for examply has weighed in with a controversial study that tries to demonstrate that spending alone has not "helped poor children catch up." The Jencks study relies heavily on statistical analyses of data. Little use, however, was made of data developed pursuant to ESEA. Jencks and Nixon social advisor Daniel Moynihan have spent great amounts of time reanalyzing the famous Coleman report, a survey mandated by the Civil Rights Ace of 1965 and completed before most of the compensatory education programs of the sixties got off the ground. The Coleman study has frequently been hailed as a masterwork of bureaucratic social science. It seemed to show that contrary to popular expectations spending alone did not substantially improve ghetto education.

But what of all the "evaluation" reports required by ESEA? As OE told Congress in 1972, "Attempts to measure the impact of the Title I program on educational achievement have been less than satisfactory in that no nationally representative data can be reported." John Evans put it more directly earlier this year: "There really has been no decent evaluation of Title I."

Title I evaluation failed on two levels. State and local organizations never went far in compliance with the law. Where evaluation reports were produced, they were often of low quality. At an early stage of ESEA, the Office of Education

recognized that the situation was hopeless. When OE hired the Research Council of the Great Cities Schools, an association of major city school systems, to survey local Title I evaluations in 1970, the contractor easily produced a pessimistic picture. While the report concluded that evaluation would improve with practice, it found local efforts had been doomed by poor planning, the political nature of evaluation, the absence of skilled evaluators, the low state of the art of educational evaluation, and a general confusion over "who was to measure what for whom."

IV

The Office of Education set out to fulfill the Congressional mandate for evaluation through a major project to gather information about Title I and other ESEA programs. The OE creation was dubbed the Belmont system, after the site where OE and state education officials met in early 1968 to gain agreement on the evaluation.

The official title of the Belmont system is the Federal-State Task Force on Evaluation." The term "evaluation" is quite explicit. In 1971, Congressman Flood (D-Pa.) asked the acting director of program planning and evaluation for the bureau of elementary and secondary education, Larry LaMoure, whether the system was indeed an "evaluation":

Mr. Flood: We hear the term "evaluation" a great deal in this administration. It is the same thing--evaluation?

Mr. LaMoure: Yes, sampling. We sample. The Belmont system is primarily composed of sampling so that we do not impose the reporting burden across the entire country.

Mr. Flood: Just so we know, with your present administration, in terms of evaluation, is it the same thing?

Mr. LaMoure: Yes sir...

Like many other systems Belmont officially masqueraded as an "evaluation" system. But Belmont was what one consultant called "a paper tiger." More accurately, Belmont was a real-world example of what John Evans caricatured as the "information system" route to evaluation. Belmont collected a great amount of paperwork, and failed to evaluate the effectiveness of educational spending.

As a joint federal-state venture, the Belmont system was to be administered by the OE Bureau of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) in conjunction with the state school officials. In OE, the program came under the authority of BESE staffers caught up in the wave of "systems analysis." They set out to design a process of data gathering that, they hoped, would replace a series of preexisting systems with one process that would provide an amazing variety of information about the effectiveness of the bulk of OE's programs.

At the heart of the Belmont system were two ambitious surveys to be administered to a sample of schools throughout the country.

The first, the Consolidated Program Information Report (CIPR) was a massive questionnaire to be filled out by school districts.[1]

The second survey was the "Comprehensive Evaluation Survey," or CES. CES was to fulfill Congressional evaluation requirements, and the director of BESE explained that it would relate socioeconomic characteristics to "educational needs and achievement, and determine what benefits have resulted from specific activities designed to compensate for special student needs."

The BESE-Belmont staff was skeletal. The ambitious designs of the staff were fleshed out through a prodigious use of contracts.

Contractors were hired to help plan the system. Abt Associates in Cambridge, Mass., received $87,000 for a study called "conceptual and applied work in planning and management systems for federally funded elementary and secondary education and development of alternative formats and guides."

[1]The Belmont system in theory was to link into other ambitious data gathering adventures. The Office of Education had commissioned Peat, Marwick and other accounting firms to develop a new round of standardized accounting procedures for schools. The CPIR, for example, referred local districts to these standards. In addition, OE was plugging away at an agency-wide management information system. Work began following a McKinsey "feasibility" study. The director of the information system program explained that, "There should be a close link between the Belmont system and our system...I don't think there"s any link."

Abt produced a manual that, with the slightest of editing, became an official OE explanation of the system. In an effort to help the states along, BESE gave Texas $200,000 to develop an educational information system. Texas in turn gave the money to Abt, and the contract quickly went beyond the control of federal authorities. When OE commissioned two consultants to review Abt's progress they reported that it was not clear what the money was being used for.

But Abt's contracts were only a fraction of those awarded by the Bureau for Belmont. Between mid-1969 and mid-1971 no fewer than 120 contracts were awarded. (The prices of awards ranged from hundreds to hundreds of thousands of dollars.) Contractors were hired to design tests and survey questionnaires, to write public relations material, to conduct training programs, to analyze data, to criticize one another's work, to write specifications for future contracts. Some of the smaller contracts were the most peculiar. Marvin and Zelda Zeldin received $3,000 for the preparation of a legislative history of one of the acts to be evaluated. It was unfair to presume that anyone in OE knew anything about the laws with which they were entrusted. When all the information was collected, OE hired a contractor to write the report to be presented to Congress. While the 1968-69 report was critiqued by outsiders, it passed through OE and on to Congress with scarcely an official alteration of the contractor's view of ESEA.

With only a handful of specialists, the Belmont group was ill-equipped to monitor the contracts it let. Missed deadlines and incomplete performance were not unusual. Like any group under pressure, the Belmont group gave out money to friends. When Belmont director Karl Hereford left OE for a teaching job, he received a $2,500 purchase order to perform quick work for the program, and a former White House Fellow who had worked with the Belmont program received the same amount to produce papers for a Belmont meeting. The Research Council for the Great Cities Schools wrote its own contract, which OE approved, to develop a Belmont information system for a local school system. Some cynics in the Belmont office suggested that the $194,000 contract represented a partial subsidy of the education lobby. Finally, when a hastily prepared and poorly publicized set of invitations for bids received few bidders, OE went out and pulled in an old friend--the New England School Development Council--to receive an award that would have gone begging.

The Belmont system "evaluated" one important item fairly well, and one very big item hardly at all. It tried to measure how much ESEA money flows into schools, but it did not measure whether the recipients learn any more or any better as a result.

In measuring ESEA "effectiveness," the Belmont system defined effectiveness as "input" to a school By this definition the system is effective--needs are met--if needy children get lots of money. This logic is at odds with the Coleman report "conclusion" that more money does not necessarily bring better results.

In order to determine effectiveness, the system must define the "needy and disadvantaged" children whom the money is supposed to help. OE's operationalization of this term reflects a curious insensitivity to recent history. The system defines needy children by asking teachers which kids they think are poor and/or likely to drop out of school.

Thus, when CES was to relate such a characteristic as "race" to need, it really was measuring whether America's teachers *think* blacks, chicanos, etc., are poor, dumb, and/or losers--not whether this is really the case. The survey does not "objectively" determine whether such children do better or worse once singled out. Pupil achievement, as garnered from tests, is not measured by the CES.

OE official Larry LaMoure explained that he thought it inappropriate to measure pupil achievement. He has only done well on the Federal Entrance Exam and the college boards, for which, he says, he crammed. He does not believe that there are any agreed-on measures of achievement.

Others have suggested that Belmont does not measure achievement because those in charge of local districts do not want to be "evaluated." The Belmont system offers ample opportunity for the locality to fudge data. All data are to be supplied on a "good faith, best estimate" basis. In some cases states and localities have attempted to withhold data completely. There are very large numbers of "no responses" for some elements of data. Critics suggested that less money be spent on data analysis, and more on finding out why there is so much missing data.

If the data do not provide Congress with a layman's notion of "effectiveness," they do not help the

localities either. The Belmont system is, in systems science jargon, a "top-down" system. The categories of data it collects and the types of analysis performed on the data, are ultimately dictated by people at the top of the system. What is useful to the top management - state and federal officials - is not necessarily useful, or comprehensible, at the local level.

By 1972 the Belmont system was dead. It was reorganized out of the BESE, and salvageable information systems were turned over to OE's in-house center for educational statistics, a group that has gained a reputation for high technical competence.

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